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IQBAL





I Q B A L  
HIS ART & THOUGHT

BY  
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## CONTENTS

	PAGES
INTRODUCTION .. .. .	xiii- xv
Chapter I. - MAINLY BIOGRAPHICAL ..	1- 36
Chapter II. - PHILOSOPHY OF EGO ..	37- 83
Chapter III. - IQBAL AND EASTERN THOUGHT	84-116
Chapter IV. - IQBAL AND WESTERN THOUGHT	117-144
Chapter V. - HIS POETIC ART ..	145-183
Chapter VI. - AS A LYRICAL POET ..	184-209
Chapter VII. - HIS <u>MATHNAWĪS</u> ..	210-236
Chapter VIII. - AS A PROSE-WRITER ..	237-257
INDEX - .. .. .	259-265



منم کہ طوف حرم کردہ ام بے تہ کنار  
منم کہ پیش بتاں نعرہ بے ہوزدہ ام  
دلہم ہنوز تقاضائے جستجو دارد  
قدم بہ جادۂ باریک تر ز ہوزدہ ام

Round the Ka'ba I have gone with an idol under my arm,  
Hosannas I have exclaimed before idols galore ;  
My heart yet thirsts afresh for ventures new,  
So I betook this path, strait and perilous !





TO  
MY BROTHER  
KHAN BAHADUR SYED 'ABDUL WAHEED, M.A.  
OF MAYO COLLEGE, AJMER  
WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE

تو خوشیدی و من سیارہ تو  
سراپا نورم از نظارہ تو



## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The following system has been used :—

(i) For letters :—

ا = a	ص = ṣ
ب = b	ض = ḍ
پ = p	ط = ṭ
ت = t	ظ = ḏ
ث = <u>th</u>	ع = ‘
ج = j	غ = <u>gh</u>
چ = ch	ف = f
ح = ḥ	ق = q
خ = <u>kh</u>	ك = k
د = d	گ = g
ذ = <u>dh</u>	ل = l
ر = r	م = m
ز = z	ن = n
ژ = <u>zh</u>	و = w
س = s	ه = h
ش = sh	ء = ’
	ی = y

(ii) For vowel signs :—

short vowels = a, i, u.

long vowels = ā, ī, ū.

diphthongs in accordance with the pronunciation.

(iii) No attempt has been made to transliterate well-known words like Urdu, Islam, etc.

mere speculation. In fact he always derided philosophy whose main concern was futile abstractions and endless speculations unconcerned with man's life or his personality.

Besides helping others in understanding Iqbal there is another object in publishing this book. The original sources of information about Iqbal are fast disappearing. His numerous friends are leaving us one by one. It is becoming more and more difficult to lay one's hands on his numerous articles, speeches and letters. Students of Iqbal must explore, exploit, and, where still possible, preserve the information which can be collected from these sources before it is too late. Thus while its main object is to help readers in understanding Iqbal, the book also indicates the lines on which Iqbalites must start work while we still possess the necessary material.

Some chapters in the book will be found to be sketchy. This was unavoidable owing to considerations of space. If they serve to stimulate other workers to expand the themes touched therein my object in writing them will be served.

One word about the translation of Iqbal's verses. It is impossible to preserve in any translation the haunting beauty and charm of Iqbal's verses, but it was considered essential for the benefit of those who are not acquainted with Urdu or Persian, that a translation of the verses should be given. So an attempt has been made to give a sense of these verses. It is possible that I have failed even here in several cases.

To me the study of Iqbal has been a source of great strength and happiness. In him I have always found that which confers healing and refreshment alike on mind and spirit. I can only hope that this book will enable many others to derive the same benefits from the study of Iqbal.

ہیچ اکسیر بہ تاثیر محبت نرسد  
کفر آوردم و در عشق تو ایمان کردم

S. A. VĀHID.

HYDERABAD-DECCAN,  
1st July, 1944.









## CHAPTER I.

### MAINLY BIOGRAPHICAL

نعرہ زد عشق کہ خونین جگرے پیدا شد  
حسن لرزید کہ صاحب نظرے پیدا شد  
فطرت آشفست کہ از خاک جہان مجبور  
خود گرے، خود شکنے، خود نگرے پیدا شد

Love exclaimed that one with a bruised heart is born !  
Beauty shivered that one with vision has come into existence !  
Nature is stirred because from the dust of the pliant World  
A self-maker, a self-breaker and a self-preserver has come into  
being !

WHAT role should an artist play in the struggle of mankind ? What is his right place in a world torn and afflicted ? This question has occurred to many artists and is, in fact, asked and answered in Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*. To Mathis Grunewald working peacefully with the Archbishop of Mainz comes the thought that art is vanity, an escape from duty. So leaving his work, renouncing love and patronage, Mathis joins the peasants in their insurrection. But here also there is no satisfaction for him ; in fact only a sense of waste and perplexity. At last in a vision he sees himself as St. Anthony and the Archbishop in the likeness of St. Paul. St. Paul brings him comfort and an answer to his perplexity. " Artists are not

as other men, their special mission is divine, so return," says St. Paul, "return and paint." Iqbal was at the threshold of his career faced with a similar dilemma expressed in the following lines written during his stay in England :

مدیر مخزن سے کوئی اقبال جا کے میرا پیغام کہہ دے  
جو کام کچھ کر رہی ہیں تو میں، انہیں مذاقِ سخن نہیں ہے

Iqbal, I would like someone to convey this message to the  
Editor of the *Makhzan*—  
Nations strong in action set no value to mere poesy !

It is impossible to express in words the gratitude that humanity owes to Sir 'Abdul Qādir and Sir Thomas Arnold for having persuaded Iqbal not to give up poetry. Mathis' conflict was linked with the fate of Ursula, his renounced love, and Albrecht, his rejected patron, but Iqbal's conflict concerned the whole of mankind. Imagine the loss humanity would have sustained if the noble, majestic and inspiring poetry of Iqbal had not added to its glory and lustre. What strikes us most is that this great poet, one of the greatest of all ages and races, could consider taking up other fields of activity besides poetry. When we begin to scan his career, the prodigious versatility of the man staggers our imagination ! Here is a poet and a philosopher who is also a fine prose-writer, a great linguist, a remarkable jurist, a well-known lawyer, a leading politician, a front-rank statesman, an esteemed educationist, a respected teacher, and a great art critic. Morley says, "Versatility is not a universal

gift among the able men of the world ; not many of them have so many gifts of the spirit as to be free to choose by what pass they will climb the steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar." But Iqbal was evidently free to make his choice. Iqbal has bewildered men by the very brilliance of his versatility ! In fact there is no more versatile, prolific and gifted genius in history ; and for similar examples of omnicompetence, one has to turn to Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Alberti and Tagore.

Iqbal has left us poetry in two languages : Urdu and Persian, and was actually planning to write *The Book of a Forgotten Prophet* in English when death snatched him away. In prose he wrote in two languages, English and Urdu, on such diverse subjects as Philosophy, Economics, Politics and Literature. As a teacher he taught Philosophy and English literature in India and Arabic literature in England. While Goethe failed as a lawyer and had to give up the profession, Iqbal practised law all his life, and whatever detractors may say, he earned his living from the profession. Nature does not produce such versatile supermen too frequently, and, as somebody has remarked, it may be a thousand years before another Iqbal is born. Humanity delights in the exploits of all great men as they serve to show to what heights man can rise, and Iqbal's life will serve to provide a noble and inspiring story of the heights to which human intellect can soar in spheres so widely apart. To give the life-history of a genius so great and so versatile in a brief

sketch is like an attempt to paint a landscape on a postal stamp. His towering personality had so many attractive facets, each superb in itself, that even if we pause to glance at each facet our impressions will need volumes. Hence we can do no more than barely mention the facets which happen to draw our attention. But it must not be overlooked that in spite of all that may be recorded, much more remains unrecorded.

Iqbal was born at Sialkot in the Punjab on 22nd February 1873. His ancestors, who were Kashmiri Brahmins, had accepted Islam about three hundred years before. Iqbal refers to his Brahmin extraction again and again in his verses :

مرا. نگم کہ در ہندوستان دیگر نمی بینی  
برہمن زادہ رمز آشنائے روم و تبریز است

Look at me, for in India you will never find again,  
A man of Brahmin extraction versed in the mystic knowledge  
of Rûm and Tabriz.

He finished his early education in Sialkot and migrated to Lahore in 1895 for higher studies. In Sialkot he was lucky to have as his teacher Shamsul-'Ulema Mîr Ḥasan, a great Oriental scholar. This great man did not take long to recognise the perspicacity of his young pupil's intellect, and encouraged him in every possible way. In later years Iqbal recognised the debt he owed to the Shamsul-'Ulema in the following lines :

وہ سب بارگہ خاندان مرصوی  
رہیگا مثل حرم جس کا آستان مجھ کو

نفس سے جسکے کلی میری آرزو کی کھلی  
 بنایا جس کی مروت نے نکتہ داں مجھ کو

That pride of the exalted family of 'Alī,  
 Whose threshold will always be sacred like the Ka'ba to me,  
 Whose teachings have always provided inspiration to me,  
 Whose kind enlightenment has developed my critical faculty.

Iqbal started writing verses while still a student at Sialkot, and his teacher Maulvī Mīr Ḥasan was so impressed with these that he advised Iqbal to write in Urdu instead of Punjābī. About this time Dāgh was recognised as one of the greatest masters of Urdu poetry, and Iqbal started sending verses to him for correction. Dāgh corrected some poems, and then wrote back to Iqbal that his poems needed no revision.

It may be mentioned that Dāgh lived long enough to see young Iqbal acquire countrywide popularity, and he often used to refer with pride to the fact that at one time he had corrected Iqbal's poems.

Although at the time of leaving Sialkot, Iqbal had only passed his first University examination, he had acquired a solid grounding in Oriental lore, and was composing verses, which though they lacked the breadth and maturity of later work already marked him out as a poet of no mean order. About this time Lahore was fast developing into a great intellectual centre. Urdu was replacing Persian throughout India ; and to encourage the development of Urdu, several societies were sponsored

and were doing great work in Lahore. Some of those societies occasionally organised poetical symposiums. A very popular symposium was the one held in Bazm-i-Hakīmān, inside Bhatī Gate at the house of Hakīm Aminud-Dīn. At one of these symposiums Iqbal recited his well-known poem with the following lines :

موتی سمجھ کے شان کر بھی نے چن لئے  
فطرے جو تھے مرے عرق انفعال کے

The drops from my tears of repentance  
Were picked up by Divine grace and regarded as pearls !

Arshad, one of the acknowledged masters of Urdu poetry, was present at this symposium ; and he was greatly impressed by these lines and foretold a great future for the young poet. Just opposite the house in which symposiums were held lived Hakīm Shahbāzud-Dīn Khān, a man with a lovable and charming personality whose house provided the meeting-place for a band of young enthusiasts interested in literary matters. Iqbal also joined this circle.

Iqbal began attending poetical symposiums and often recited poems there. But still his popularity was confined to the world of undergraduates and those connected with the educational department. About this time a literary society was formed in Lahore whose membership included some well-known literary figures of the time. Iqbal recited his well-known poem on the Himalayas at one of the

meetings of this society. This poem was very much appreciated by all. It contained modern ideas draped in old Persian phrases and was full of patriotic sentiments. It reflected the aspirations of young India. Many requests for its publication were received, but Iqbal turned all those down. In the end he allowed it to be published in the *Makhzan* for April 1901, a newly started Urdu journal. This introduced Iqbal to a wide circle all over India. In the beginning the publication of his poems was confined to *Makhzan* but as his popularity and fame spread, other papers and journals also approached him for permission to publish his poems, and very often succeeded in getting this.

The first important poem he read in a large gathering was at the annual meeting of the Anjuman Himāyat-i-Islam in 1899. The poem was *Nala-i-Yatīm*. Next year he read *An Orphan's Address to the 'Id Crescent* at the same meeting. Both these poems, and another poem, *Abr-i-Guharbār*, recited about this time are not included in Iqbal's published works. For a student of Iqbal all these poems possess great importance, and are helpful to those interested in the study of the development of his poetical genius.

While writing great original poems, Iqbal could still find time to translate English poems like *The Spider and Web* and *The Mountain and the Squirrel*. In *The Bird's Complaint*, really meant for children, he touches politics too, and about this time he wrote several short poems which contained references to politics. The most important poem of



this type was *Ṣadā-i-Dard* :

۔ جل رہا ہوں کل نہیں پڑتی کسی پہلو مجھے  
ہاں ڈبو دے اے محیط آب گنگا تو مجھے

I am burning and I find no rest on any side,  
O waters of the Ganges, drown me !

In March 1904, he wrote *Taṣwīr-i-Dard* :

وطن کی فکر کر ناداں مصیبت آنے والی ہے  
تری بربادیوں کے مشورے ہیں آسمانوں میں  
ذرا دیکھ اس کو جو کچھ ہو رہا ہے، ہونے والا ہے  
دھرا کیا ہے بھلا عہد کہن کی داستانوں میں  
نہ سمجھو گے تو مٹ جاؤ گے اے ہندوستان والو  
تمہاری داستان تک بھی نہ ہوگی داستانوں میں

Think of thy country, O thoughtless ! trouble is brewing,  
In heavens there are designs for thy ruin.

See that which is happening and that which is to happen,  
What is there in the stories of olden times ?

If you fail to understand this, you will be exterminated,

O people of India !

Even your story will not be preserved in the annals of the  
world !

He further says :

بنائیں کیا سمجھ کر شاخ گل پر آشیاں اپنا  
چمن میں آہ کیا رہنا جو ہو بے آبرو رہنا

جو سمجھے تو تو آزادی ہے پوشیدہ محبت میں  
 غلامی ہے اسیر اختیار ما تو رہنما

How to make up one's mind to build a nest on the rose-  
 bearing bough ?

What is the good of living in the garden if it is a life of  
 disgrace ?

If you realise it, the secret of freedom lies in love,  
 And slavery is the result of distinguishing one from  
 another.

Then came *Nayā Shawālā* :

کچھ فکر پھوٹ کی کر مالی ہے تو چمن کا  
 بوٹوں کو پھونک ڈالا اس بس بھری ہوانے

You are in charge of this garden, hence find a remedy for  
 disunity,

This pestilential air has ruined all the shrubbery.

These were followed by the stirring *Tarāna-i-Hindī* :

مذہب نہیں سکھاتا آپس میں بیر رکھنا  
 ہندی ہیں ہم وطن ہو ہندوستان ہمارا

Religion does not inculcate hatred of each other,  
 We are all Indians and India is our native land !

Towards the middle of last century, modern Urdu poetry was passing through the throes of birth, and those were naturally accompanied by severe pangs in the shape of mutual recriminations and adverse criticism of every innovation. New sub-

jects made the adoption of new words and expressions necessary, and this caused a flutter in the dovecots of conservatives who opposed all innovations. Unable to question the undoubted melody of Iqbal's beautiful verses, they began criticising his language. They charged him with introducing Punjabi expressions in Urdu. Iqbal took part in these controversies, and his replies to these critics were always convincing and impressive. These controversies remind one of Tennyson's *Literary Squabbles*. In due course all criticism melted into admiration, and the voice of detractors, though never completely suppressed, sank into a low murmur.

At Lahore Iqbal came under the influence of Sir Thomas Arnold, an influence which in its potency can be well compared with that of Maulvī Mīr Hasan at Sialkot. It did not take Sir Thomas Arnold long to discern Iqbal's gifts of heart and intellect, and with his sympathetic insight he soon succeeded in piercing the shell that obscured a most beautiful individuality. While Maulvī Mīr Hasan's influence and guidance had given Iqbal a deep insight into the humanistic foundations of Muslim culture, Sir Thomas Arnold's company introduced him to all that is best and noblest in Western thought, and at the same time initiated him into the modern methods of criticism.

Iqbal wrote some great poems during this period and published his first book which was incidentally the first book on Economics in the Urdu language, but he had still no clear vision of his great mission. The poems written about this time, although perfect

from the artistic point of view and good enough to earn for him an important place in the temple of immortals, lacked the breadth of vision and maturity of thought which characterised his subsequent compositions. About this time he had an idea of writing an epic poem on the model of masters like Milton. In 1903 he wrote to a friend :

“ For a long time I have been yearning to write in the manner of Milton (*Paradise Lost*, etc.) and the time for that seems to be fast approaching, because in these days there is hardly a moment, when I am not thinking seriously of this. I have been nurturing this wish for the past five or six years, but the creative pangs have never been so acute as now. ”

This letter reminds one of Milton's letter to Diadoti : “ But you ask what I am thinking of ? Let me boast in your private ear. Of immortality, God help me ! I am growing my wings and preparing for flight ; but as yet my Pegasus only rises on very frail wings ; let me be humbly wise.”\* Milton lived to attain immortality and Iqbal lived to write poems which would have extorted admiration from Milton.

As advised by Sir Thomas Arnold, Iqbal went to Europe for higher studies in 1905. On his way to Bombay, he visited the Dargāh of Khwāja Nizāmud-Dīn in Delhi and paid his homage to the two great Indian poets that are buried there—Amīr Khusrau and Ghālib. When a singer recited one of Ghālib's poems in front of the great poet's tomb, Iqbal sobbed bitterly and embraced Ghālib's grave.

\* Rose Macaulay : *Milton*, p. 45.

In Europe Iqbal began to see the larger horizon of things and to move in spacious realms. He stayed there for three years, and these years played a great part in the development of his thought. It was not a period of deeds but one of preparation. The libraries of Cambridge, London, and Berlin were easily accessible ; and Iqbal read voraciously and discussed matters with European savants and scholars. His outlook on life underwent two important changes about this time : he got an utter dislike for narrow and selfish nationalism which was the root cause of most political troubles in Europe, and his admiration for a life of action and struggle became more pronounced.

جنبش سے ہے زندگی جہاں کی یہ رسم قدیم ہے یہاں کی

The life of this world consists in movement,  
This is the established law of the world.

اس رہ میں مقام بے عمل ہے پوشیدہ قرار میں اہل ہے  
چلنے والے نکل گئے ہیں جو ہڑے ذرا کچل گئے ہیں

On this road halt is out of place,  
A static condition means death.  
Those who are moving have gone ahead,  
Those who tarry even a while get crushed.

Whereas previously :

زندگانی جس کو کہتے ہیں فراموشی ہے یہ  
خواب ہے، غفلت ہے، سرمستی ہے، یہ ہوشی ہے یہ

That which is called life is nothing but forgetfulness.  
It is slumber, indifference, intoxication and unconscious-

ness.

Now :

راز حیات پوچھ لے خضر فحشتہ کام سے  
 زندہ ہر ایک چیز ہے کوشش ناتمام سے

Ask the secret of life from *Khidr* inspired by noble motive  
 Every object lives by ceaseless striving.

But there was still conflict :

نفی ہستی اک کرشمہ ہے دل آگاہ کا  
 لا کے دریا میں نہاں موتی ہے الا اللہ کا

Self-negation can be achieved only by a discerning heart,  
 The pearl of affirmation is concealed in the ocean of  
 negation.

But the conflict was fast subsiding :

فیض ساقی شبنم آسا طرف دل دریا طلب  
 تشنہء دائم ہوں آتش زیر پا رکھتا ہوں میں

The *Saqi* is distributing wine in small quantities, but I  
 need oceans,  
 I am perpetually thirsty as if I have fire under my feet.

And he himself wanted to create new values and  
 new objects :

دیکھ یثرب میں ہوا ناتہ لیلیٰ بیکار  
 قیس کو آرزوئے نو سے شناسا کر دیں

See that in *Yathrab* *Lailā*'s camel has become decrepit,  
 Let us kindle new desires in *Qais* !\*

\* *Qais* is the *Orlando Furioso* of Arabia. He used to sit by the road-side to get a glimpse of *Lailā* when she went about on her camel. Once the camel became useless, *Qais* needed desires.

Another important change connected with his stay in Europe was the change in the medium of expression. He started writing verses in Persian. Altogether the stay in the West was a period of intensive preparation. He got his degree from Cambridge, his doctorate from Munich, and qualified as a barrister. He officiated for six months as Professor of Arabic in London University, and delivered a series of lectures in London, the first of which was delivered in Caxton Hall and was reprinted in all the leading papers.

Before his return to India he foretold to Europe in lines of rare prophetic vision the abyss towards which her materialism was leading her :

دیار مغرب کے رہنموا لوالہ خدا کی بستی دو کاں نہیں ہے  
 کھرا جسے تم سمجھ رہے ہو وہ اب زر کم عیار ہوگا  
 تمہاری تہذیب اپنے خنجر سے آپ ہی خود کشی کریگی  
 جو شاخ نازک پہ آشیانہ بنے گا ناپائیدار ہوگا

O residents of the West, God's earth is not a shop,  
 The gold you are thinking to be genuine will now prove to  
 be of low value.  
 Your civilization is going to commit suicide with her own  
 dagger,  
 The nest which is made on a frail bough cannot but be  
 insecure.

During his stay in England, and soon after his return to India, Iqbal was wondering whether he should adopt a life of action or reflection. To attain perfect balance between the two was well-

nigh impossible. And as he made progress in the reflective sphere he decided to forego prizes that were within his reach as a man of action. It was better so for the world.

Iqbal returned to Lahore in August 1908, and joined the Government College, Lahore, as a part-time Professor of Philosophy and English literature. He was allowed to practise law. But after some time he resigned the professorship and concentrated on law. His reactions to nationalism and pride of race and colour became very pronounced at this stage :

جو کرے گا امتیاز رنگ و خوں مٹ جائے گا  
ترک خرگاہی ہو یا اعرابی والا گھر

He who will make distinction of colour and blood will  
He may be a nomadic Turk or a pedigreed Arab. [perish,

But the great event was the publication of his poem, *Asrār-i-Khudī*, in 1915. This book created a storm in the dovecots of the pseudo-mystics. His attack on Hāfiz, as a representative of those who preached ascetic inaction, was strongly resented and several replies in prose and verses were published. But these effusions of pseudo-artists and pseudo-mystics were in due course consigned to oblivion, and Iqbal lived to see the great popularity achieved all over the world by his great poem. Nothing is so sacred as a rut and no one is more annoying than the person who jolts us out of it. This happened in Iqbal's case too, but his fame grew in spite of the



detractors. So far as Iqbal himself was concerned, from now onwards there was complete accord in his thought, the goal was clear and the future lines for his work were well-defined. The task that Iqbal had set himself was gigantic and lesser people would have quailed at the immensity of the mission which involved shaking millions of people out of moral inertia that had been paralysing their spirits for centuries, but a prophet and a seer like Iqbal was not to be dismayed by these considerations. He flung a challenge to the forces of reaction, inertia, and stupor in unmistakable terms and never faltered in the performance of his mission. At times he realised the loneliness of his position and prayed for a sympathetic companion in these words :

دل بدوش و دیدہ بفرداستم در میان انجمن تنہاستم  
 شمع را تنہا پیدن سمل نیست آہ یک پروانہ من اہل نیست  
 من مثال لالہ صحرایم در میان محفلے تنہاستم  
 خواہم از لطف تو یارے ہمدے از رموز فطرت من محرے

My heart is with yestereve, my eye is on tomorrow :

Amidst the company I am alone.

It is not easy for the candle to throb alone :

Ah, is there no moth worthy of me.

I am as the tulip of the field,

In the midst of a company I am alone.

I beg of Thy grace a sympathising friend,

An adept in the mysteries of my nature.

His letter to Ḥāfiẓ Aslam Jairājpuri gives one an indication of the mental anguish which he suffered at this stage from the unkind criticism of those

groping in darkness and ignorance. The following extract from this letter will be found interesting : " I am very grateful to you for your review on *Asrār-i-Khudī* which I saw in the *Alnāẓir*. ' I saw in thee a man in these days when men are so rare ! ' The verses that I had written on *Hāfiz* were really meant to illustrate and criticise a literary principle. They had nothing to do either with *Khawājā's* personal views or beliefs, but the general public could not appreciate this fine distinction and the result was a long controversy. If we accept the principle that beauty is beauty whether its consequences are good or harmful, then *Khawājā* is one of the best poets of the world. Anyway I have dropped those lines and in their place I have tried to explain the literary principle which I still consider healthy."\* But nothing was going to keep Iqbal back from preaching his gospel.

This is not the place to deal with the growth of Iqbal's poetical genius, but no biographical sketch of Iqbal can afford to ignore his poetry, for if it can be said of any poet that his life and poetry were one, that poet is Iqbal. *Asrār-i-Khudī* was followed by *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī*. The poem was completed in 1917, but was not published till the following year. It was about this time that Iqbal was seriously thinking of narrating the story of the *Ramāyana* in Urdu verse. But the idea never materialised.

For purposes of study Iqbal's poetry can be divided into two parts :—

(i) That written up to and including *Rumūz-i-*

\* This letter is published in the Iqbal number of ' *Jauher*, ' Delhi.

*Bekhudī.*

(ii) That written after the publication of *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī*.

Before going to England, Iqbal wrote some beautiful poetry in Urdu, but it can be said of this poetry that Iqbal sang because, like a linnet, he had to. All this poetry shows the perplexity of the restless genius. Stay in the West brought about a complete change of outlook in Iqbal's views. This change was naturally reflected in his poetry. On his return Iqbal wrote some epoch-making verses like *Shikwā*, *Jawāb-i-Shikwā* and *Sham'a aur Shā'ir*. All these poems display the change in Iqbal's outlook, but except the *Sham'a aur Shā'ir* they did not yet give any idea of the message that the poet was to deliver to mankind. The message was first delivered in *Asrār* and *Rumūz*. The genius had now passed through the formative period, had found the most suitable way for expression and the perplexity had disappeared. Iqbal now became one of the prophets and henceforth he sang only of God and of immortality. *Asrār* and *Rumūz* are both masterpieces and very few literatures of the world can produce many poems to match these. But from the artistic point of view even these masterpieces lacked the maturity of poems which were to follow, and so it is safe to put the dividing line in 1918, the year which saw the publication of *Rumūz*. In poems published after *Rumūz* there is complete equipoise between the poet and the prophet, and poetry and philosophy are perfectly wedded. Actually the poetic genius also comes in full bloom

after *Rumūz*, and we are reminded of the words of Coleridge : " No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher." In 1921 appeared *Khidr-i-Rāh* and in 1922 *Ṭulū'-i-Islam*, the former still shows signs of the quest but the latter breathes only of hope and faith. Both these poems are in Urdu and are the finest poems in *Bāng-i-Dirā*, under which title Iqbal published his collection of early Urdu verses. After the publication of these poems, appeared *Payām-i-Mashriq* or *The Message of the East*. The book is a collection of miscellaneous verses in Persian and was written in response to Goethe's *Öst Westerliche Diwan*. All the poems in *Payām-i-Mashriq* show a supreme artistry and a perfect command over the language, which is the latest Persian to which no Persian can take exception. *Payām-i-Mashriq* was followed two years later by *Zabūr-i-'Ajam* or *Psalms of the East*. The book contains mystic, vitalising and ennobling verses. *Zabūr-i-'Ajam* was followed by *Jāvid Nāmāh* which can be regarded as Iqbal's magnum opus. It is an Oriental *Divine Comedy* and in it Iqbal has beautifully expressed his thoughts on the various problems that confront men in daily life. Iqbal says about the book :

آنچه گفتم از جهانے دیگر است  
این کتاب از آسمانے دیگر است

What I have described is about another world,  
This book is about a different firmament !

The poem will rank among the world's classics with Homer's *Iliad*, Kālidāsa's *Shākuntala*, Firdausī's *Shāh Nāmah*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Goethe's *Faust*. While the central idea of the poem is vital and creative, and Iqbal elucidates eternal truths and discusses most delicate questions affecting mankind he does this all so artistically that the great epic does not contain a single line, in which the heaviness of the thought has in any way infected the verse.

After finishing the *Jāvid Nāmah*, Iqbal turned to Urdu again, and published a collection of Urdu poems *Bāl-i-Jibra'īl* in 1935 and another collection *Ḍarb-i-Kalīm* in 1936. In 1934 he had also published a Persian poem *Musāfir*. Another Persian poem *Pas chai bāyad kard* appeared in 1936. The final collection of his poems, containing poems in Urdu as well as Persian, and called *Armughān-i-Hijāz* appeared posthumously.

Iqbal's place in literature is certainly amongst the greatest in the world both as a poet and as prose-writer, but that is certainly not his only value. His contribution to human thought is equally great, and his biographers will have to unfold two fascinating stories: one about the development of his literary genius and the other about the growth of his thought. The latter will mean an account of the mental conflicts through which he passed. It will be quite easy to trace the story of the development of his poetic genius as his poetry provides sufficient material for it, and all that is needed is a student endowed with a critical faculty, wide enough to

grasp the extensive range of his poetry, catholic enough to appreciate new points of view, and penetrating enough to understand the real meaning of all that he has written. But it will not be so easy to study the development of his thought or to unfold the story of the mental conflict that he passed through. We have his article in the *Indian Antiquary* to show that he was thinking of a superman as early as 1902. His early poems breathed of stress and struggle, and this belief in the importance of struggle was transformed into a faith during his stay in the West. His feelings towards nationalism crystallised into a definite aversion by seeing what excesses were perpetrated in its name every day in Europe. So much is clear. But we have no conclusive evidence to show as to when he thought out his philosophy of the ego. We have the following letter from Dr. McTaggart written in 1920 which will throw some light on the subject: "I am writing to tell you with how much pleasure I have been reading your poems (*Secrets of the Self*). Have you not changed your position very much? Surely in the days when we used to talk philosophy together, you were much more of a pantheist and mystic. For my own part, I adhere to my own belief that selves are the ultimate reality, but as to their true content and their true good, my position is as it was, that is to be found in eternity and not in time, and in love rather than in action." This shows that Iqbal still believed in pantheistic Sufism when he left Cambridge in 1908. His poem *Asrār-i-Khudī* was published in 1915. It must have been written in 1914 or so. Thus Iqbal

must have developed his philosophy between 1908 and 1914. A reference to Iqbal's philosophy is also contained in his poem *Sham'a aur Shā'ir* which was published in 1912. Thus the years of conflict are really from 1908 to 1912. These years were momentous years, and the development of Iqbal's thought in these years will prove a most interesting study. We have the statement of 'Alī Bakhsh that on the day Iqbal resigned his professorship in the Government College he said: " 'Alī Bakhsh, I have a message for my people, and it could not be conveyed if I remained in Government service. So I have resigned the service, and I hope that I will be able to carry out my wish now." This happened sometime in 1911. Is it possible that Iqbal had already got over the great mental conflict? Had he worked out his entire philosophy or had yet only caught a faint gleam of it? It is hoped that somebody will trace the story of the development of Iqbal's thought on these lines.

In 1922 a knighthood was conferred upon Iqbal. There is an interesting story behind this conferment of knighthood. It is said that a European visitor came to Lahore and stayed at Government House. He had heard people reciting Iqbal's poems in Central Asia and so was keen on meeting Iqbal during his stay in Lahore. His Excellency the Governor invited Iqbal to Government House and introduced him to his guest. The two enjoyed this meeting and discussed literature, philosophy, and arts. After Iqbal's departure, the guest expressed his surprise that the Indian Government had done

nothing to honour so great a man as Iqbal. The Governor who had no idea of Iqbal's wide learning and great popularity immediately sent up a proposal for his knighthood and this proposal was duly approved. Iqbal accepted the honour and this brought elevation to the order of knighthood.

Iqbal was one of the most charming conversationalists, and his talk was always adapted to the interests of his audience. In one instant he would be discussing the Theory of Relativity, and in the next the art of wrestling. His vivacious talk, which he could carry on for hours, was as free from the artifice of conscious wit as it was from the vulgarities of gossip. Scintillating ideas poured forth in endless succession, and there was never a note of malice or a touch of personal feeling in his talk. His ready wit never lost effervescence even during his last days. His accessibility was proverbial, and his visitors included men from all grades of society. Referring to Winckelmann, Goethe once told Eckermann, "One learns nothing from him, but one becomes something." Those who listened to Iqbal left his presence not only conscious of having become something but also having learnt a good deal. His sweetness of manner and good nature were most remarkable, and he was a very pleasant companion for all those whose minds were capable of elevation. Just as he was always ready to welcome everybody at his home, he replied with great promptitude to all letters received by him irrespective of whether the correspondent was known to him or not. Many people used to wonder how a busy man like Iqbal



found time to reply to every letter he received. Amongst his correspondents could be numbered dictators like Mussolini, kings like Nādir Shāh, scholars and philosophers like McTaggart and Nicholson.

His simple nature endeared Iqbal to all those with whom he came in contact, and he had a knack of making friends. Actually making friends was one of his methods of elevating those with whom he came in contact. While he had numerous friends in all countries and in all grades of society, his intimacy with Girāmī the poet from Hoshiarpur needs special mention. Girāmī was a poet of the old school, and to him must go the credit for having been one of the first to recognise Iqbal's poetical genius and mission. Girāmī is the author of the well-known couplet:

در دیده معنی نگران حضرت اقبال  
پیغمبری کرد و پیغمبر نتوان گفت

In the eyes of those who know the secret of things,

Iqbal performed a prophet's mission, yet he cannot be  
called a prophet.

Iqbal and Girāmī, although differing widely in the quality of their genius, remained attached to each other till the end.

Iqbal led such a busy life that apart from journeys connected with professional or political work, or trips undertaken for rest to Kashmir and hill-stations, he never travelled much. Once when he was invited to attend an educational conference, refusing the invitation he wrote back: "In these days of

turmoil I regard my home as Noah's Ark." But in 1928 he undertook a journey to Southern India, and among other places visited Madras, Mysore, Hyderabad, Seringapatam, and Aligarh. He delivered a course of lectures at Madras, Hyderabad, and Aligarh which have been published by the Oxford University Press under the title of *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

There is a small incident which deserves mention as it serves to illustrate Iqbal's generous nature. When the late King Nādir Shāh was passing through Lahore on his way to Afghanistan, Iqbal went to see him at the railway station. Iqbal took aside the king, and asked him if he needed any money for the great expedition on which he was proceeding. The king knowing that Iqbal himself did not possess an over-abundance of wealth was taken aback by this question and replied : " You are a poor man and I cannot take any money from you." Iqbal remarked, " I am poor but I am sure I have more money than you. Could you let me know how much money you have? " Nādir Shāh had to confess that he had very little, in fact not more than a few hundred rupees. Thereupon Iqbal said : " I have five thousand rupees and you can have these if you like." Whether Nādir Shāh accepted the amount or not is not known, but the incident throws great light on Iqbal's generous character. He was so concerned about the disturbances in Afghanistan that he was willing to give his all to the man who was going to restore order in that unhappy country.

During his visits to Europe in 1931 and 1932 he

met, among others, the renowned French philosopher Henri Bergson in Paris. When Iqbal repeated to him the tradition "Don't vilify Time," the old French philosopher, although suffering from paralysis, jumped from his invalid chair. On his way back Iqbal visited Spain and saw most of the Arab buildings there. He also went to Jerusalem to attend the Islamic Conference. This visit made him keen on visiting other Islamic countries in order to study the mental conflict through which they were passing. But unfortunately this wish could not be realised.

### AS AN EDUCATIONIST

IQBAL'S educational philosophy has already been dealt with in an illuminating sketch by one of the leading educationists of India, but the part played by him directly as an educational reformer still remains to be described. As remarked above he was closely connected with the Punjab Education Department for a number of years, teaching such different subjects as English and Arabic literatures and Philosophy. In London he officiated as professor of Arabic literature for six months. Even after the cessation of his connection with the Educational Department, he continued to exercise a great influence over the affairs of the Panjab University by working on various bodies connected with it. For years he was Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies and Chairman of the Department of Philosophical Studies. He was closely connected with the Islamia College, Lahore, for years. During the sessions of the Round Table Conference, he worked on the various commit-

tees connected with educational reforms in India. In 1933 he was invited by the Afghan Government to visit Kabul and advise them on educational reforms in Afghanistan in general and the administration of Kabul University in particular. Most of the reforms suggested by him have been carried out by the Afghan Government. He took great interest in the Jami'a-Millia of Delhi and was always ready to help its promoters in every possible way. Thus it will be seen that he has left a permanent impression on three important Universities of the East : Kabul, the Panjab, and the Jami'a-Millia.

As a teacher he was very popular with his students and always took great interest in their welfare.

### AS A LAWYER

As remarked already Iqbal practised as a lawyer from 1908 to 1934, when ill-health compelled him to give up the practice. Law is reputed to be a jealous mistress, and it is very difficult to attain eminence unless one is prepared to give undivided attention and time. But it will be a travesty of truth to say that Iqbal did not earn eminence as a lawyer. That a man with such multifarious activities could not possibly give his undivided attention to the legal profession was foregone, but that in spite of these activities he attained a fair degree of eminence is a credit even to his versatile genius. Apart from the heavy toll his various activities as a poet, writer, thinker, politician, etc., levied on his time, we have to remember that Iqbal never wanted to make a fortune out of law. His aim was to earn enough to

live on. It is said that he used to take only as many cases as brought him enough to live on. But that cannot detract from his merits as a great lawyer. He brought to his profession a profound knowledge of law and a great conscientiousness and thoroughness. These qualities were enough to enable him to climb the greatest heights in the profession if he had chosen to do so. Once when a friend asked him if in the midst of his multifarious activities he did not often forget about his legal engagements, he related a story : " One day," said Iqbal " when I was sitting in the Bar Library, a client came running to me and said that his case was being taken up by the judge. I told him that the case was fixed for some other day. But the client insisted on my going to the court room. So I went up to the judge and drew his attention to the fact that the case was not fixed for that day. The judge then sent for the papers and discovered that the case had been taken up that day through a mistake on the part of the clerk of the court, and was really fixed for another day." This shows Iqbal's conscientiousness and interest in his professional work.

As a lawyer he was always upright and honest, and would never accept a case in which he was sure that he could not be of any help to his client.

### AS A POLITICIAN

TIME has not yet come to view his politics in their proper perspective, and we do not want to give any detailed account of his political activities. The important position that he occupied in politics will

be appreciated from the following message Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the President of All-India Muslim League sent to his son :

“To me he was a friend, guide and philosopher, and during the darkest moments through which the Muslim League had to go he stood like a rock, and never flinched one single moment.”

In 1927 he was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and made important contributions to its deliberations. In 1930 he gave evidence before the Simon Commission. In the same year he was appointed president of the annual session of the Muslim League. It was in his presidential address to the Muslim League at Allahabad that Iqbal elaborated his scheme for the solution of the political deadlock in India. During the course of his address Iqbal said :

“ ‘Man,’ says Renan, ‘is enslaved neither by his race, nor by his religion, nor by the course of rivers, nor by the direction of mountain ranges. A great aggregation of men, sane of mind and warm of heart, creates a moral consciousness which is called a nation.’ Such a formation is quite possible, though it involves the long and arduous process of practically remaking men and furnishing them with fresh emotional equipment. It might have been a fact in India if the teachings of Kabir and the Divine Faith of Akbar had seized the imagination of the masses of this country. Experience, however, shows that the various caste-units and religious units in India have shown no inclination to sink their respective individualities in a larger whole. Each group is intensely jealous of its collective existence. The formation of the kind of moral consciousness which constitutes the essence of a nation in Renan’s sense demands a price which the peoples of India are not prepared to pay. The unity of an Indian nation, therefore, must be sought,

not in the negation, but in the mutual harmony and co-operation of the many. True statesmanship cannot ignore facts, however unpleasant they may be. The only practical course is not to assume the existence of a state of things which does not exist, but to recognize facts as they are, and to exploit them to our greatest advantage. And it is on the discovery of Indian unity in this direction that the fate of India as well as of Asia really depends. India is Asia in miniature. Part of her people have cultural affinities with nations in the east, and part with nations in the middle and west of Asia. If an effective principle of co-operation is discovered in India, it will bring peace and mutual good-will to this ancient land which has suffered so long, more because of her situation in historic space than because of any inherent incapacity of her people. And it will at the same time solve the entire political problem of Asia.

“It is, however, painful to observe that our attempts to discover such a principle of internal harmony have so far failed. Why have they failed? Perhaps we suspect each other's intentions, and inwardly aim at dominating each other. Perhaps in the higher interests of mutual co-operation, we cannot afford to part with the monopolies which circumstances have placed in our hands, and conceal our egoism under the cloak of a nationalism, outwardly simulating a large-hearted patriotism, but inwardly as narrow-minded as a caste or a tribe. Perhaps we are unwilling to recognize that each group has a right to free development according to its own cultural traditions. But whatever may be the causes of our failure, I still feel hopeful.”

His scheme is now generally known as the Pakistan scheme, and has been adopted as the goal by the Muslim League. It is unnecessary to discuss the merits of the scheme here, but it may be said that while other people might have also thought that

a solution of India's political troubles lay in a settlement on the lines of Pakistan, to Iqbal must go the credit for having been the first to present before the world the scheme as a practical proposition. In a letter of 21st June 1937, to Mr. M. A. Jinnah, after referring to the communal discord prevalent in the country, he wrote :

"In these circumstances it is obvious that the only way to a peaceful India is a redistribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. Many British statesmen also realise this, and the Hindu-Muslim riots which are rapidly coming in the wake of this constitution are sure further to open their eyes to the real situation in the country. I remember Lord Lothian told me before I left England that my scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles in India, but that it would take twenty-five years to come."

In 1931 and 1932 he attended the Round Table Conference which met in London to frame a constitution for India. He took an active part in the various committees appointed by the Conference and made substantial contributions to their deliberations. Thus it will be seen that Iqbal played an important part in Indian politics, and it is hoped that a dissertation will be published, dealing with Iqbal's politics and political activities and embodying all his political speeches.

### THE LAST PHASE

IQBAL developed kidney trouble in 1924. For its treatment he intended to visit Vienna, but some friends advised him to consult the well-known Indian physician Ḥakīm 'Abdul-Wahāb Anṣarī, known as



Ḥakīm Nābīnā, 'the blind physician.' His treatment cured Iqbal of the kidney trouble. After this he kept fairly good health till the beginning of 1934 when as a result of exposure he got a throat affection which resulted in loss of voice. The trouble was diagnosed as due to local paralysis of the laryngeal nerves. Every possible treatment was tried in Lahore, Delhi and Bhopal, and at times there were hopes of complete recovery but these were not realised. During the last phase his stay in Bhopal, mainly for treatment, deserves special mention, as it served to strengthen the ties of mutual esteem and friendship which characterised his relations with the Nawab of Bhopal, whose munificent treatment reminds us of the relations between the Duke of Weimar and Goethe. At Bhopal Sir Ross and Lady Masood looked after Iqbal with great care and consideration. They did not spare any effort which might make Iqbal comfortable. In 1935 he was invited to Oxford as Rhodes lecturer, but ill-health compelled him to refuse this invitation. In 1937 Iqbal developed cataract in his eye. In spite of periods of comparative good health the last phase was embittered by constant ill-health in the physical sense. But as regards his creative activities this period was the most productive. Till the last Iqbal kept in touch with every question of the day and took great interest in the controversies going on.

Iqbal was a profound student of the Qur'ān. He had devoted a whole lifetime to its study, and he wanted to write a book on it and had collected a number of books from Europe and Egypt for this

purpose. He was thinking of calling the book *The Reconstruction of Muslim Jurisprudence*. But failing health compelled him to give up the idea of writing this book which he had already started. It is most unfortunate that Iqbal's profound and erudite scholarship and lifelong study of the Qur'ān could not assume a tangible form for the benefit of succeeding generations. He himself used to say : " If I could finish this 'work I would have died peacefully." As a matter of fact it was as early as 1917 that Iqbal wrote to a friend that he was busy compiling a book on Muslim Jurisprudence which in its exhaustiveness would be on the lines of Imām Sarkhisi's monumental work *Mabsūt*.\* It is hoped that the notes left by him on the subject will be carefully preserved and expanded by some scholar. About this time Iqbal thought of writing *The Book of a Forgotten Prophet* in English verse, but this work also never assumed any definite form on paper. As regards poetry he continued composing verses till the very end. The last poem was dictated a few days before his death. Those who nursed him say that it seemed that with the decadence of his physical strength his intellect had received a new impetus.

He disliked taking medicines and often used to say that he took them mainly because he did not want his ego to suffer weakening.

His illness took a serious turn on 25th March 1938, and in spite of the best medical aid and careful nursing of his friends, he breathed his last in the

\* Letter to Maharajah Sir Kishen Pershad of 15-4-1917.

early hours of 21st April. Half an hour before his death he recited the following verses :

سرود رفته باز آید کہ ناید    نسیم از حجاز آید کہ ناید  
 سرآمد روزگار این فقیرے    دگر دانائے راز آید کہ ناید

The departed melody may recur or not !  
 Zephyr may blow once more from Hejāz or not !  
 The days of this Faqīr have come to an end,  
 Another wise man may come or not !

When dying Keats said : " I feel the flowers growing over me. " Byron passed on with the gentle words : " I must sleep now. " Goethe called for " more light. " Most moving death phrase of all was that of the deaf composer Beethoven, who said : " I shall hear in Heaven. " The last word Iqbal uttered was " God. " He lived in God, and died in God. " Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. "

There are not many clearer cases in the history of mankind of a man born with a mission, of a life irresistibly but unconsciously moving along a pre-ordained path. To attain his mission Iqbal spurned prizes that the world covets. He realised the fundamental truth that man's personality can endure and develop only in an atmosphere of freedom, and it was in preaching fervently to his people this forgotten truism that his greatness lay. We are too near the portent to gauge its meaning or to estimate its influence, but we cannot fail to see in Iqbal one of those great natural forces that shape the destinies of mankind.

The following touching message which the great

poet Tagore sent on learning of Iqbal's death deserves quotation : " The death of Sir Muḥammad Iqbal creates a void in literature that like a mortal wound will take a very long time to heal. India whose place in the world is too narrow can ill afford to miss a poet whose poetry had such universal value."

The day previous to his death Iqbal had a visit from an old friend of his student days in Germany Baron von Voltheim. This visit evoked old memories and Iqbal talked to his old friend a good deal about their stay in Munich. The two discussed poetry, philosophy and politics for over an hour, and those who saw them talking little suspected that the end was so near. When the Baron remarked that his presence might be tiring to Iqbal, he replied : " It is just the other way. Your breath is like balm to me." Another striking feature of the last day was frequent visits to his room from his little daughter, Munīrā. Once when she left his room he remarked : " She instinctly realises that father's death is near at hand." Here again those who heard these remarks little appreciated their true significance at the moment.

Although his illness was long and protracted the end was sudden and very peaceful. On his death-bed this great poet-prophet presented a picture of peace and composure. It seemed as if he was just resting after finishing his life's work. There was a faint smile playing on his lips and one was irresistibly reminded of his well-known verse :

نشان مرد مومن با تو گویم چو مرگ آید تبسم برب اوست

I tell you the sign of a 'Momin'—

When death comes there is smile on his lips.

'Momin' is Iqbal's term for a superman, and there is no doubt that Iqbal was a superman. He died with a smile on his lips.

He was given a funeral which kings might envy, and his remains were buried near the gate of the historic Shahī Mosque in Lahore, late in the evening in the presence of thousands of mourners.

Amongst those who nursed Iqbal during the last illness were his admirers and friends Raja Hasan Akhtar, Muhammad Shafī, Nadhīr Niyāzī and Hakīm Quraishī, besides his devoted servant 'Alī Bakhsh'. Their names are mentioned because they are entitled to the gratitude of all lovers of Iqbal; besides, humanity is always interested to know the names of those who looked after its great ones during the last days of their earthly existence.

شرح غم تو لذت شادی بجان ده

لعل لب تو طعم شکر در دلم ده

## CHAPTER II

### • HIS PHILOSOPHY OF EGO

ہیچ کس رازے کہ من گویم نہ گفت  
ہیچو فکر من در معنی نہ سفت  
سر عیش جاودان خواہی بیسا  
ہم زمین ہم آسماں خواہی بیا

No one hath told the secret which I will tell  
Or threaded a pearl of thought like mine. [life !  
Come, if thou would'st know the secret of everlasting  
Come, if thou would'st win both earth and heaven.

PROFESSOR R. A. NICHOLSON of Cambridge has remarked about Iqbal : " During his stay in the West he studied modern philosophy, in which subject he holds degrees from the Universities of Cambridge and Munich. His dissertation on the development of metaphysics in Persia, an illuminating sketch, appeared as a book in 1908. Since then he has developed a philosophy of his own."\* It is not possible to understand Iqbal without first understanding this philosophy. So an attempt will be made here to give a brief outline of his philosophy of ego. It has been said that all

\* Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. vii.

philosophical systems have their origin in some perplexing problems. When a great intellect encounters a difficult problem and tries to find its solution the thoughts engendered in these attempts when elaborated form a philosophical system. What was the problem that set Iqbal thinking? When Iqbal finished his studies and began looking round he found a strident and triumphant West riding roughshod over a prostrate East. Towards the close of the nineteenth century conditions in the East were particularly depressing. The sick-man of Europe was in his last gasps; Persia was being crushed under the weight of two mighty powers and was in such a pitiable condition that her plight moved an American to write the *Strangling of Persia*; Afghanistan was a vassal; India was not only torn by internal dissensions but was also backward in every respect; China was the cockpit of warring parties. This gloomy picture could not but set an observer like Iqbal thinking. He began looking beyond symptoms for the root cause of the evil. It did not take him long to diagnose the disease. His deep and wide knowledge of sociology and the history of different cultures convinced him that the main responsibility for Oriental decadence lay at the door of those philosophical systems which inculcated self-negation, abnegation, and self-abandonment. These systems instead of buoying up man to overcome the difficulties of life, weakened his moral fibre by teaching him to seek peace in running away from the difficulties so that higher prizes in another world might be available to him.

Most of the important religious systems of the world can be divided into two groups : Indian and Semitic. All religious systems which originated in India preferred ascetic inaction to a life of stress and struggle.\* Of the Semitic religions somehow or other Christianity and Judaism came to adopt a similar outlook very early in their history. But early in the seventh century there appeared in Western Asia a religious system essentially practical in outlook and dynamic in thought. The kernel of its teachings lay in action. In course of time this system whose main teachings were based on a gospel of action also became corrupted, and under the impact of alien thought, mostly Hellenic, began subscribing to the theory of self-negation and self-effacement. Iqbal's wide studies in history, sociology, and philosophy convinced him that the decadent condition of Islam was due to the importation of Platonic and neo-Platonic ideas, which regarded the world as a mere illusion not worth striving for. These ideas corresponding in an unusual degree to those based on the Vedanta found

\* Lest these remarks about Indian religions should be misunderstood we would like to quote an Indian writer. Professor M. Hirayanna says in his *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* : "These are the two elements common to all Indian thought : the pursuit of Moksha as the final ideal and the ascetic spirit of the discipline recommended for its attainment."—(p. 24). Further discussing the Visistadvaita the above author says : "As in the other Indian systems Moksha is conceived here also as freedom from mundane existence."—(p. 412). A European author, Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson says : "Like Buddhism and Brahmanism, Jainism might be defined as a way of escape not from death but from life, but unlike either of them, it hopes to escape not into nothingness nor into absorption but in a state of being without qualities, emotions or relations, and removed from the possibility of rebirth." *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 89.



their culmination in the pernicious doctrine of *Wahdat-al-Wujūd* or unityism. This doctrine led one to believe in God as immanent and regarded the whole world merely as an emanation. Thus a pantheistic deity was substituted for a personal and transcendent God of Islam. Much of what passed under the name of mysticism was actually dope whose only object was to make men spurn a life of activity and exertion.

Ideas based on this doctrine sapped the energies of the people. They encouraged men to run away from the difficulties of life instead of grappling with them, and engendered a feeling of other-worldliness which led people to take delight in spending all their time in thinking of the joys of Nirvāna. Life came to be regarded as a mere illusion, and nothing in life seemed worth striving for. These thoughts led in due course to an elaborate but ill-conceived system of pseudo-mysticism which produced men about whom a Western scholar has remarked that "as citizens they are undeniably a grave scandal and a useless burden to the State; they sap the national prosperity and demoralise the national character."\* It is not proposed here to trace the history of Sufism in Islam, but it must be remarked that the doctrine of Unityism was first elaborated by the Spanish mystic, Shaikh Muḥyud-Dīn Ibnul 'Arabī, popularly known as Shaikh-ul-Akbar. When writing his commentary on the Qur'ān, he approached the subject from the same angle from which Shri Shankar-

\* R. A. Nicholson : *Introduction to the translation of Dīwāni Shamsi Tabriz.*

acharya had interpreted the Gītā. According to Ibnul 'Arabī: "There is nothing but God, nothing in existence other than He; there is not even a 'there' where the essence of all things is one."\* Gradually this doctrine, which corresponds to Vedantism as interpreted by Shankaracharya, came to be accepted by the generality of mystics all over the Islamic world and pantheistic ideas became so absorbed in Islam that in the fourteenth century they formed the common theme of Islamic poetry. All this only served to paralyse capacity for action amongst the people.†

The doctrine of unityism was assailed by several Muslim thinkers, notably Ibn-Taymiyya and Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhīndī; but they all attacked the doctrine merely as an article of faith for purely theological reasons, and while volumes were being written by both sides, the poison generated by these ideas was infecting the very roots of the Islamic body-politic. Iqbal being essentially a pragmatist, assailed the doctrine on practical grounds. It was his

\* *Futuhāt*, p. 884, quoted by Dr A. E. Affifi, in *The Mystical Philosophy of Ibnul 'Arabī*, p. 55.

† Lest these remarks about Ibn 'Arabī should be resented by those who hold the Shaikh in great reverence, it should be made clear that for us Ibn 'Arabī personifies that school of Sufis in Islam who preached that the relation between the world and God was one of identity and on the basis of this doctrine promulgated a life of ascetic inaction. There are some scholars who maintain that Ibn 'Arabī did not preach this. Without any desire to enter into a controversy the following remarks of a research scholar are given as they will be found interesting: "As to the relation between the world and God, Ibn 'Arabī holds that it is one of identity. In bringing out this identification he proceeds either from the negation of the world or from the affirmation of God. Proceeding from the negation of the world Ibn 'Arabī holds that the world as such is merely nominal, unreal, imaginary, objectively non-existent, and that God alone exists." Dr. B. A. Faruqi: *The Mujaddid's Conception of Tawḥīd*, p. 91.

originality of thought that traced the connection between the doctrine of unityism and the decadence which characterised all Eastern people in general and Islamic people in particular. Undaunted by the extent to which the poison from these ideas had worked in the intellectual and psychological life of all Eastern people, Iqbal came forth to challenge the existing ideas by proclaiming that life is real and not a mere illusion. He asks, "What then is life?" and answers "It is individual: its highest form so far is the Ego (*Khudī*) in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive centre." According to Iqbal the source of creation is an Indivisible Existence (*Wujūd-i-Basīt*) with definite powers of perception and volition. To operate these powers the *Wujūd* divides into Self and unself. The purpose of the unself is to provide a mirror for the self to see itself as well as to serve as an objective for the operations of the self. These operations lead to the evolution of the self. Every object possesses an individuality and in the scale of life the status of every object is fixed according to the extent it develops its individuality and gains mastery over the environment. Individuality attains highest development in man and here it becomes personality. "Physically as well as spiritually man is a self-contained centre, but he is not yet a complete individual. The greater his distance from God the less his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completest person. Not that he is finally absorbed in God. On the other hand he absorbs God into himself. The true person not only absorbs the world of matter, by mastering it he

absorbs God Himself into his ego. Life is a forward assimilative movement. It removes all obstructions in its march by assimilating them. Its essence is the continual creation of desires and ideals, and for the purpose of its preservation and expansion it has invented or developed out of itself certain instruments, *e.g.*, senses, intellect, etc., which help to assimilate obstructions. The greatest obstacle in the way of life is matter, Nature; yet Nature is not evil, since it enables the inner powers of life to unfold themselves. The ego attains to freedom by the removal of all obstructions in its way. It is partly free, partly determinate, and reaches full freedom by approaching the individual who is most free—God.”\* According to Iqbal the characteristics of the ego are these:—

- (i) It is not space-bound in the sense in which the body is.
- (ii) True time—duration belongs to it alone.
- (iii) It is essentially private and unique.

پیکر هستی ز آثار خودی است  
 هر چه می بینی ز اسرار خودی است  
 خوشتن را چون خودی بیدار کرد  
 آشکارا عالم پندار کرد  
 صد جهان پوشیده اندر ذات او  
 غیر او پیدا است از اثبات او

\* Iqbal's letter quoted by Prof. R. A. Nicholson in the Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xv.

سازد از خود پیکر اغیار را  
 تا فراید لذت پیکار را  
 چون حیات عالم از زور خودی است  
 پس بقدر استواری زندگی است  
 چون زمین بر هستی خود محکم است  
 ماه پابند طواف بیهم است  
 هستی مهر از زمین محکم تر است  
 پس زمین مسحور چشم خاور است

The form of existence is an effect of the Self,  
 Whatsoever thou seest is a secret of the Self,  
 When the Self awoke to consciousness,  
 It revealed the universe of Thought.  
 A hundred worlds are hidden in its essence :  
 Self-affirmation brings Not-self to light.  
 By the Self the seed of opposition is sown in the world :  
 It imagines itself to be other than itself.  
 It makes from itself the forms of others  
 In order to multiply the pleasure of strife.  
 Inasmuch as the life of the universe comes from the  
 Life is in proportion to this power. [power of the Self,  
 Because the earth is firmly based on itself,  
 The captive moon goes round it personally.  
 The being of the sun is stronger than that of the earth :  
 Therefore is the earth fascinated by the sun's eye.

Life according to Iqbal is a forward assimilative process and its essence is the continual creation of

desires and ideals. The creation of new desires and ideals tends to create a state of constant tension. "Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal."\* Thus the human ego has a definite mission on earth in two main directions. In the first place it has to struggle with its environment and to conquer it. By this conquest it attains freedom and approaches God which is the most free individual. In the second place the ego has to maintain a constant state of tension and thereby it attains immortality. By attaining freedom and immortality the ego conquers Space on the one hand and Time on the other.

But in addition to attaining freedom and immortality the ego has to help in the upward march of humanity by leading to the birth of a higher type of man—the Superman or Perfect-man—who is the ideal to which all life aspires.

This is the gist of Iqbal's philosophy of ego. It is clear that the basis of this philosophy is a strong faith in the evolution of man in three directions—Personal Freedom, Personal Immortality, and Production of Supermen. How is this evolution on three planes to be attained? By fortifying personality. Man must follow all that tends to fortify

\* Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xiv.

personality and must avoid all that is likely to weaken it. As Iqbal says "The idea of personality gives us a standard of value : it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion, and ethics must be judged from the standpoint of personality." \*

Thus it will be seen that it is of highest importance in the evolution of man to study the factors and forces which fortify the human ego or personality. According to Iqbal these are :

(i) Love.

(ii) *Faqr* which can be best described by the expression "supreme indifference to the rewards the world has to offer."

(iii) Courage.

(iv) Tolerance.

(v) *Kasb-i-ḥalāl* which can be best translated as 'living on lawful earnings.'

(vi) Taking part in original and creative activities.

The following remarks will serve to elucidate the nature of these factors :

(i) *Love*.—For Iqbal Love connotes far more than the bringer of a purely individual joy. To him Love is the regenerating spirit of the Universe, the spirit that should cut the Gordian knot of all man's perplexities and provide an antidote to all human vices. Love as understood by Iqbal brings forth beautiful things and thoughts in this world. To him love for an individual means

\* Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xvi (Third Edition).

the assimilation and absorption of the qualities prominent in the beloved. No words can convey to us a complete picture of Love as understood by Iqbal. He has himself described it again and again in prose and poetry. All those descriptions placed together will give us some idea of this great force in the affairs of men, but considerations of space preclude our attempting that here. Referring to it he says in a letter to Professor Nicholson, "This word is used in a very wide sense and means the desire to assimilate, to absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them. Love individualises the lover as well as the beloved. The effort to realise the most unique individuality individualises the seeker and implies individuality of the sought, for nothing else would satisfy the nature of the seeker."\* Iqbal has described the connection between Love and Ego in these lines :

نقطہ نورے کہ نام او خودی است زیر خاک ما شرار زندگی است  
 از محبت می شود پائنده تر زنده تر سوزنده تر تابنده تر  
 کیمیا پیدا کن از مشت گلی بوسه زن بر آستان کاملی  
 کیفیت باخیزد از صبای عشق هست هم تقلید از اسمای عشق  
 عاشقی محکم شو از تقلید یار تا کند تو شود یزدان شکار

The luminous point whose name is the Self,

Is the life-spark beneath our dust.

By love it is made more lasting,

\* Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xviii (Third Edition).



More living, more burning, more glowing.  
 Transmute thy handful of earth into gold,  
 Kiss the threshold of a Perfect Man.  
 From the wine of Love spring many spiritual qualities :  
 Amongst the attributes of Love is blind devotion.  
 Be a lover constant in devotion to the beloved,  
 That thou mayst cast thy noose and capture God.

Poets in all languages, mystics in all countries and metaphysicians in all religions have stressed the importance of Love in the development of human character, and they have described what they understand by Love in beautiful language ; but nowhere is either so much stress laid on Love as a factor in the development of human personality or is the term Love used in such a wide sense as in Iqbal. The nearest approach to Iqbal is perhaps the great mystic poet, Maulāna Rūmī.

The following beautiful passage from Thomas Kempis will give our Western readers an idea, however incomplete, of what Iqbal understands by Love :

“Love feels no burden, thinks nothing of trouble, attempts what is above its strength, pleads no excuse of impossibility ; for it thinks all things lawful for itself and all things possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and it completes many things, and brings them to a conclusion, where he who does not love, faints and lies down.”

(ii) *Faqr*.—It is impossible to find a proper word for *Faqr* in English. It is difficult enough to explain what Iqbal means by this term to Oriental readers, but for Western readers not versed in Oriental methods of expressing thought it is well-nigh impossible to grasp the true

meaning of this expressive word. By *Faqr* Iqbal means the disdain for the rewards which this world or the next has to offer and which the majority of mankind covet. *Faqr* indicates that attitude of mind which enables a man to strive for any object spurning all delights and all rewards except the attainment of worthy ends. In the accepted sense of the term, it means 'beggary' or 'to beg,' and *Faqīr* is a beggar who lives on other people's alms and favours. Thus it will be seen that the term has acquired a meaning repulsive in the extreme, and it is obvious that anybody as keen as is Iqbal on the development of man's personality cannot possibly extol such a soul-killing action. This makes it all the more imperative for us to understand what Iqbal actually means by the term *Faqr*. According to Iqbal, the term means an attitude of complete detachment and superiority to one's material possessions. As such it provides a shield against the temptations which beset one in the world. A *Faqīr* works for a noble cause, not with any ulterior motives but just for the pleasure which striving in a noble cause gives him. Iqbal has given a definition of *Faqr* in the following lines :

اک فقر سکھاتا ہے صیاد کو خنجرِ  
 اک فقر سے کھلتے ہیں اسرارِ جہانگیری  
 اک فقر سے قوموں میں مسکینی و دلگیری  
 اک فقر سے مٹی میں خاصیتِ اکسیری

One Faqr teaches the hunter the art of hunting,  
 One Faqr teaches the secrets of world conquest,  
 One Faqr brings to nations poverty and dejection,  
 One Faqr imparts to clay the qualities of elixir.

Again pointing to the stifling effects of riches and material possessions he says :

اب ترادور بھی آنے کو ہے اے فقر غیور

کھا گئی روح فرنگی کو ہوا ہے زر و سیم

Oh self-respecting *Faqr* your time is fast coming,  
 The greed for gold and silver has sapped the spirit of  
 Western nations.

Churchill, in his sketch of Lawrence, has incidentally described *Faqr*, and the description is quoted below as it will serve to elucidate this term :

"Part of the secret of this stimulating ascendancy lay, of course, in his disdain for most of the prizes, the pleasures and comforts of life. The world naturally looks with some awe upon a man who appears unconcernedly indifferent to home, money, comfort, rank or even power and fame. The world feels, not without a certain apprehension, that here is someone outside its jurisdiction, someone before whom its allurements may be spread in vain."\*

It is not easy to improve upon this description of a *Faqīr*. The keynote to a *Faqīr's* character is his utter unselfishness. He works for the world's good without thought of personal reward here or hereafter. In the words of Bernard Shaw put into Barbara's mouth : "I have got rid of the bribe of heaven. Let God's work be done for its own sake : the work He had to create us to do because it cannot be done except by living men and women."† It is obvious

\* Winston Churchill : *Great Contemporaries*, p. 165.

† *Major Barbara*, Act III.

that only those gifted with supreme vision are capable of displaying utter disregard for the rewards; and it is only such people who leave a permanent mark on the affairs of the world.

قمر مومن چیست؟ تسخیر جہات  
بندہ از تاثیر او مولا صفات

What is a *Momin's Faqr*? Conquest of time and space;  
It endows a slave with the attributes of the master!

(iii) *Courage*.—Without courage, physical and moral, it is impossible for man to achieve anything really important in this world. All progress means encountering obstacles which only serve to draw the best out of those possessing courage. It is only the weaker ones who succumb to obstacles. For the courageous, obstacles only serve to develop character and to bring forth potential virtues. The courageous can be pierced, gashed and torn, but this will only fortify their determination—determination to triumph over fear. There is no failure of nerve, no submission to forces of evil, or to a desire to give in except to conviction. Demonstration of force has no effect on the courageous, who refuse to bow to any behests except those of God :—

عشق را آتش زن اندیشه کن  
رو به حق باش و شیریں پیشه کن

Let your Love burn all doubts,  
Be subservient only to truth which will make a lion of you.

Again and again Iqbal impresses upon the younger generation the fact that the royal road to

success in life lies in "living dangerously," defying all powers which tend to obstruct the enjoyment of legitimate rights :

آئینِ جواں مرداں حق گوئی و بے باکی  
اللہ کے شیروں کو آتی نہیں رو باہی

The code for men of courage is truth and fearlessness,  
God's lions know not the cunning of a fox.

Courage does not consist merely in facing manfully physical dangers. There is greater courage in not losing faith in one's standard of values when things go wrong and people deride one's ideals. There is still greater courage required in facing misrepresentation at the hands of friends and foes. In these times of stress and torment, courage provides an anchor-sheet to human character, a pivot round which other virtues play.

How beautifully has Barrie said :

"Courage is the thing. All goes if courage goes. What says our glorious Johnson of courage : 'Unless a man has that virtue he has no security for preserving any other. We thank our creator three times daily for courage instead of for our bread, which, if we work, is surely the one thing we have a right to claim of Him. This courage is a proof of our immortality, greater even than gardens when the eve is cool.' Pray for it. Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered."

(iv) *Tolerance*.—Tolerance for other people's views and manners represents the strength of a high order, and its cultivation cannot but be beneficial to any human society. It is obvious that if every member of a group is to develop its

individuality to the fullest extent, absence of tolerance will only lead to perpetual quarrels and conflicts. So the ego must develop tolerance which in its turn tends to fortify the ego. As Iqbal has remarked : "The principle of the ego-sustaining deed is respect for the ego in myself as well as in others."\* Thus tolerance sustains and strengthens the human Ego. In fact the tolerance itself is born of strength and not of weakness. Iqbal lays great emphasis on the development of tolerance :

حرف بد را بر لب آوردن خطاست  
 کافر و مومن همه خلق خداست  
 آدمیت احترام آدمی  
 باخبر شو از مقام آدمی  
 بنده عشق از خدا گیرد طریق  
 می شود بر کافر و مومن شفیق

It is wrong to utter a bad word ;  
 The infidel as well as the faithful are God's creations ;  
 Humanity consists in respect for man ;  
 So acquaint thyself with the dignity of man ;  
 The man of Love takes his cue from God  
 And is kind to the infidel and to the faithful alike.

But it may be remarked that the tolerance that Iqbal preaches is in fact the tolerance of a man of strong faith who, possessing his cherished convictions realises the respect he owes to those of others.

(v) *Kasb-i-halāl*.—This is a very expressive and inclusive phrase with such wide

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 113.

application as to provide guidance for human conduct in all spheres of human activity. Translated literally the phrase means lawful acquisition ; this in the language of jurists and orthodox theologians includes all acquisition not acquired by foul means like cheating, fraud or theft. But according to Iqbal the phrase has a wider meaning, and means acquiring things or ideas solely through one's personal effort and struggle. This means prescribing for all egos a life of active effort and struggle, and totally excludes all thoughts of self-renunciation. Enjoying anything for the acquisition, of which a person has not actually worked is bad for the ego, so much so that even acquiring anything by inheritance is also outside *Kasb-i-ḥalāl*. Iqbal says :

ہشیمان شو اگر لعلی ز میراث پدر خواہی  
کجا عیش برون آوردن لعلی کہ در سنگ است

Be ashamed if you want to inherit a diamond from your  
forbears,

This cannot give the pleasure that is in quarrying a diamond.

Similarly all borrowed ideas are to be religiously avoided.

ز خاک خویش طلب آتشی کہ پیدا نیست  
تجلی دگرے درخور تقاضا نیست

Get from your own dust the fire that is not visible,  
Because the light of others is not worth having.

(vi) *Creative and original activity*.—We have  
seen that by extolling *Kasb-i-ḥalāl*

Iqbal enjoins a life of activity if the ego is to attain proper development. Now he goes further and lays down that all activity must be creative and original if the ego is to be sustained and fortified. Mimicry and imitation are of no avail and must be definitely discouraged :

تقلید سے ناکارہ نہ کر اپنی خودی کو  
 کر اس کی حفاظت کہ یہ گوہر ہے یگانہ

Do not demean your personality by imitation,  
 Preserve it, as it is a priceless jewel.

Great stress is laid by Iqbal on creativeness, and he refers to the Qur'ān which expressly mentions creators besides God. In fact, according to Iqbal, the difference between a believer and an infidel is not one of theological belief or disbelief, but is constituted in the primal fact that while a believer is a creator, an infidel is not. Iqbal makes God say :

ہر کہ اور ا قوت تخلیق نیست  
 بیش مابجز کافر و زندیق نیست

One who does not possess creative power,  
 To us is naught but an infidel and a heretic.

Originality and creativeness are not given to us in equal measure; still every ego has an urge for creativeness which is stultified by adverse factors, either by our defective educational system or mistaken authority. To fortify itself the ego must remove these adverse factors and persist in creative and original efforts. The creative in man raises him



to the divine plane, and frustration of the creative impulse distorts human character. Failure in any creative effort means nothing, mere attempt is dynamic and creative.

Having understood the forces which tend to fortify personality we have to consider the influences which lead to its weakening. These are given below :

- (i) Fear.
- (ii) Beggary (*Su'āl*).
- (iii) Slavery.
- (iv) Pride of extraction.

We will deal with all these influences briefly.

(i) *Fear*.—As we all know fear in all its different phases, such as worry, anxiety, anger, jealousy and timidity, is the greatest enemy of the human race. Of all the influences retarding human growth, fear has robbed man of more efficiency and happiness, has made more cowards, and more people failures than any other influence. Fear produces all sorts of unhealthy and abnormal emotional developments in man, which warp his nature and stultify his moral growth. The schools of modern psychologists led by Freud, Jung and Adler have investigated the far-reaching effects of fear on human nature, and their researches have clearly demonstrated that most of the abnormalities in men, the bully, the coward, the tyrant and the dictator, have their origin in suppressed fear. The talented Turkish authoress, Halide Edib, has made the following remarks in her book *Inside India* :  
 “ The release of the child's mind from fear in the

East is of primary importance. Home life, school life, civic life, all used to train him by fear. The blessed rod, or the Unseen Spirit, followed him from the cradle to the grave.....Parents, teachers, rulers, native or foreign, have mostly used Fear. Strike, strike, strike.....The result is either the coward and the bullied individual with all sorts of unhealthy inhibitions, or the bully himself, when he gets a chance.....”\* Hence it is essential that the ego must overcome the paralysing effects of fear, before it can attain full growth.

اے کہ در زندان غم باشی اسیر از نبی تعلیم لا تحزن بگیر  
گر خدا داری ز غم آزاد شو از خیال بیش و کم آزاد شو  
قوت ایمان حیات افزاید ت و رد لا خوف علیہم باید ت  
چون کلیے سونی فرعونے رود قلب او از لا تحف محکم شود  
بیم غیر الله عمل را دشمن است کاروان زندگی را رهن است  
هر که رمز مصطفیٰ فهمیده است شرک را در خوف مضمر دیده است

Oh thou who art a prisoner in the prison of worry,  
Learn from the Prophet the lesson of “ Grieve not.”  
If thou hast a god, get rid of worry,  
Get rid of the idea of profit and loss.  
Strength of faith adds to life ;  
One should recite continually “ Fear not.”  
When Moses goes to a Pharaoh  
His heart gets strength from the words ‘ Do not fear.’  
Fear of anybody except God is inimical to action,  
It is a robber for the caravan of life.

\* Halide Edib : *Inside India*, p. 107.

Even under these the atmosphere is so depressing that it stifles the growth of the ego which needs freedom for its normal growth. Hence all political subjugation and economic serfdom should all be banned if mankind is to attain moral and spiritual stature.

(iv) '*Nasab-parastī*.'—'*Nasab-parastī*' means the pride in one's stock or extraction. This must be discouraged as it tends to create barriers between man and man based on considerations other than their intrinsic worth. Races, nations, tribes, communities, castes and families all claim for themselves their peculiar excellence, and on these their superiority. Originally when political powers were centred in certain families, people took pride in their families. In recent times the wars and Bolshevism have tended to disregard pride in one's family, but statecraft has tried to encourage pride in one's 'race.' The result is as remarked by Huxley and Haddon: "There is not one but a multitude of 'chosen peoples.' Allowing for differences of atmosphere and language, some of the noblest claims made of the British, by Mr. Kipling for instance, are closely similar to the claims made for the tribes of Israel by the authors of certain biblical books." \*

While family is an ancient biological factor, the 'nation-state' is a modern conception, and race has now superseded both former conceptions and elaborate and specious pseudo-science of racial biology has been created merely to justify class pre-

\* J. S. Huxley and A. C. Haddon : *We Europeans*, p. 17.

judices and political ambitions, but pride in either one's family, nation or race is equally meaningless and prejudicial to human growth. Hence it must be discouraged.

To take pride in such extraneous considerations as one's family, nation or race is not a healthy feeling and it is bound to retard the development of an ego.

برسب نازان شدن نادانی است حکم او اندر تن و تن فانی است  
ملت ما را اساس دیگر است این اساس اندر دل ماضی است

To be proud of ancestry is a mistake,  
Ancestry relates to body and body is ephemeral.  
Our community has a different basis,  
The secret of which is in our hearts.

It will be noticed from the above remarks that many of the factors mentioned above represent the positive and negative of the same picture. For example, if a man acts with courage he is discarding fear, while a man who lives on *Kasb-i-ḥalāl* naturally avoids *Su'āl*. It is very difficult to include the benign and malign forces influencing the development of ego in water-tight compartments. All these forces act and react and tend to mix together along the boundary. But all factors exercising any influence on the development of the ego have been detailed separately for the sake of elucidation and right emphasis.

By encouraging influences which fortify an ego and by avoiding those which lead to its weakening, the ego grows from strength to strength. In this evolutionary process the ego has to pass through

three stages :

(a) Obedience to the Law.

(b) Self-control, which is the highest form of self-consciousness or ego-hood.

(c) Divine vicegerency.

Obedience to the Law and Self-control also play a great part in the fortification of the ego, but Iqbal prefers to regard them as representing milestones on the upward march towards the goal—Superman. To an ego properly disciplined and suitably fortified the first stage is represented by a phase where obedience to the Law comes unconsciously. The ego has no conflicts to face so far the Law is concerned. On the other hand obedience to the Law along with other benign forces tends to school the ego for the second evolutionary phase where ego attains perfect self-control. Self-control in its turn prepares the ego for the final stage—Divine vicegerency. As regards the third and final stage it is impossible to improve upon Iqbal's own description :

“The *nā'ib* (vicegerent) is the vicegerent of God on earth. He is the completest Ego, the goal of humanity, the acme of life both in mind and body ; in him the discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. The highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason, become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity, and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind ; his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth.”

اے سوار اشب دوران بیا

اے فروغ دیدہ امکان بیا

شورش اقوام را خاموش کن  
 نغمه خود را بهشت گوش کن  
 خیز و قانون اخوت ساز ده  
 جام صبا بآید محبت باز ده  
 باز در عالم بیسار ایام صلح  
 جنگجویان را بده پیغام صلح  
 نوع انسان مزرع و تو حاصلی  
 کاروان زندگی را منزلی

Appear, O rider of Destiny !  
 Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change !  
 Silence the noise of the nations,  
 Imparadise our ears with thy music !  
 Arise and tune the harp of brotherhood,  
 Give us back the cup of the wine of love !  
 Bring once more days of peace to the world,  
 Give a message of peace to them that seek battle !  
 Mankind are the cornfield and thou the harvest,  
 Thou art the goal of Life's caravan.

Whilst rules for the development of an individual ego are laid down above, the ego can develop fully only in association with other egos and not in isolation. The Perfect-man has to work in co-operation with others to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth, and he cannot exist independently of the group to which he belongs. As a matter of fact this adjustment of personal activity to social good is

primarily beneficial to the Perfect-man himself, because he cannot achieve his highest possibilities except by identifying himself with social purpose. This means that the ego has to live and work in a society. Referring to the influence of society on individuals McDougall has remarked: "It would seem probable that apart from the influence of society in moulding the characters of its members, the behaviour of all men would be as rude, as ruthlessly self-seeking, as unrestrained by any moral considerations as behaviour of most other mammals."\* We have to decide what kind of society is needed for the free development of the ego and what kind of society provides greatest scope for the developed ego. Before determining the nature of this ideal society we have to lay down optimum relations between society and individual. On the one hand there are individualists who regard the development of the individual as the supreme end of life's process, and the State as merely an instrument of his development. On the other hand there are Hegelians who regard the State as a super-personal entity whose strength and integrity are far more important than the rights of the individual. Between these two extremes Iqbal takes a balanced view and maintains that the growth of a full and free personality is impossible except where it draws its spiritual sustenance from the culture of the group to which it belongs. On the other hand, the group in its own interests owes a duty to the individual and so interferes with his development as little as possible,

\* William McDougall: *Energies of Men*, p. 112,

and only when common good demands it. In short the quality of the life of a community is simply the quality of the life of the individual writ large, and unless the individual quality is sound and disciplined the community is bound to be in confusion. As Kipling says :

“ Now this is the law of the jungle—as old and as true as  
the sky,  
And the wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the wolf  
that shall break it must die.  
As the creeper that girds the tree-trunk the Law runneth  
forward and back,  
Yet the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of  
the wolf is the pack.”

Iqbal has put it better ; he says :

فرد را ربط جماعت رحمت است جوهر او را کمال از ملت است  
فرد تا اندر جماعت گم شود قطره وسعت طلب قلم شود  
فرد تنها از مقاصد غافل است قوتش آشفتنی را مایل است

To an individual attachment to a group is blessing,  
His potential worth attains perfection from the group.  
When an individual identifies himself with a group,  
The drop in its quest for expansion becomes an ocean.  
The lone individual is unaware of objectives,  
His strength is prone to disintegration.

For such an ideal society Iqbal has laid down eight essential requirements :

- (i) It must be based on spiritual considerations like monotheism.
- (ii) It must centre round inspired leadership or prophethood.
- (iii) It must possess a code for its guidance.



- (iv) It needs a centre.
- (v) It must have a clear goal towards which the whole community should strive.
- (vi) It must gain supremacy over the forces of nature.
- (vii) The communal or collective ego must be developed in the same way as the individual ego is developed.
- (viii) It must safeguard maternity.

Now we shall deal with these requirements in detail.

(i) *Monotheism*.—Any society which fails to recognise the fundamental brotherhood of mankind is doomed to failure. Basing any human society on considerations of race, colour, creed or geography is like putting up an imposing building with insecure foundations. If society is to be based on a secure basis that basis must be spiritual—too deep-rooted to be affected by any adverse influences. This spiritual basis is provided by the principle of monotheism which gives us a foundation of world unity by admitting the basic principle that all mankind represents one brotherhood. The principle of monotheism viewed psychologically seeks to restore to a torn and divided world its integral unity. It provides for all members of the society unity of thought and unity of action. Hence all great religions have insisted on this doctrine. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me, thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them, for I, the Lord, thy God, am a Jealous

God. . . .” (Exod. xx, 3-5). The Qur’ān says :

God forgiveth not  
That equals should be set up  
With Him ; but He forgiveth  
Anything else, to whom  
He pleaseth ; to set up equals with God  
Is to devise a sin  
Most heinous indeed.

—IV : 48.

The importance of monotheism as a cement for the warring and disintegrating elements of humanity is described by Iqbal in the following lines with special reference to Islamic society :

“ The new culture finds the foundation of world unity in the principle of ‘ *Tawhīd*.’ Islam as a polity, is only a practical means of making this principle a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind. It demands loyalty to God, not to thrones. And since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to man’s loyalty to his own ideal nature.” \*

The belief in one God provides an effective antidote to all those reactionary forces which exploit hatred and provoke antagonism. It provides a psychological basis for the society by restoring the essential unity of mankind, and by insisting that all mankind represents one brotherhood bound together by a spiritual connection. It is only such ideas which can act as a centrifugal force, and break down the division of mankind into warring tribes and antagonistic camps.

آن که در صد سینه پیچید یک نفس  
سری از اسرار توحید است و بس

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 140.

دین ازو حکمت ازو آئین ازو  
 زور ازو قوت ازو تمکین ازو  
 قوت او برگزیند بنده را  
 نوع دیگر آفریند بنده را  
 یم و شک میرد عمل گیرد حیات  
 چشم می بیند ضمیر کائنات

That what leads to unison in a hundred individuals  
 Is but a secret from the secrets of *Tawhīd*.  
 Religion, wisdom, and law are all its effects,  
 Power, strength, and supremacy originate from it.  
 Its influence exalts the slaves,  
 And virtually creates a new species out of them.  
 Within it fear and doubt depart, spirit of action revives,  
 And the eye sees the very secret of the Universe !

(ii) *Prophethood*.—The part played by prophets in the evolution of humanity cannot be overestimated, and the devotion that men have always displayed towards all great prophets gives us a measure of mankind's recognition of the debt it owes to those inspired leaders. Loyalty to prophets has always been a source of strength to their people ; and for the Muslims the great and remarkable personality of the Prophet provides a focus where all loyalties converge and all disrupting tendencies disappear. Thus faith in prophethood or inspired leadership provides the second important corner-stone for the structure of the ideal society.

از رسالت در جهان تکوین ما از رسالت دین ما آئین ما  
 از رسالت صد هزار مایک است جزو ما از جزو مالاینفک است  
 از رسالت هم نوا گشتیم ما هم نفس هم مدعا گشتیم ما

On prophethood is based our existence on this earth,  
 From prophethood are derived our religion, our code.  
 The Prophet moulded hundred thousands of us into one,  
 So that various parts were inseparably welded into each  
 From prophethood we attained unity of tune ; [other.  
 It imparted to us the unity of breath and the unity of  
 objective.

It will be seen that once a society is formed on the spiritual basis of monotheism and prophethood as distinct from a purely temporal basis, it ceases to be a function of space and time. It acquires a value which is not superseded by the limits of time or space, and becomes imperishable and eternal. It possesses a sustaining power which enables it to survive all attacks from within and without. In fact it has what the Indian philosophers call the quality of *mirtyunjayatan* or deathlessness.

(iii) *Code*.—A society must have a code to guide it during periods of uncertainty and trouble. Amidst the fluctuations of values which cause the truths and certainties of one generation to appear as superstitious and empty conventions in the eyes of a succeeding generation, the code imparts stability to the life of the people. This code serves as an anchor-sheet in this world of shifting values, and when the community, faced with the

turmoils of life, begins to lose faith in itself and in its standard of values, the code serves as a beacon of light directing the community to safe waters. Without a proper code the communal life is sure to end in confusion. For the Muslims the code is provided by the Qur'ān.

(iv) *Centre*.—Every society needs a centre from which all its cultural and social activities will radiate. These activities provide the society with its life-blood, and the centre functions as a heart providing fresh and invigorating blood to the distant limbs. So long as the centre is there to provide this life-giving blood the whole body will function properly and without dislocation. The British Empire has its centre in London. To every Britisher the pilgrimage to the Town is a great occasion and something to be looked for. For the Muslims this centre is provided by Mecca.

(v) *Objective*.—To attain real solidarity every group or community must have a well-defined goal or objective towards the attainment of which all its activities must be guided. This ideal serves as a landmark to guide the community when, owing to decadence, there is disunity of purpose among the rank and file. For the Muslims this objective is the propagation of the doctrine of the unity of God or monotheism, and a nobler objective it is hard to think of! Others may have such mundane objectives as the conquest of land or the attainment of political power and supremacy, but these are not capable of stimulating the life of high endeavour and unselfishness which only a great

spiritual objective is capable of doing.

(vi) *Conquest over the forces of nature.*—To fortify his personality every individual must acquire mastery over his environment, that is to say, attain sway over the forces of nature by developing the study of science. This means the development of a scientific outlook in man who thereby begins probing into the mysteries of nature. While all this is necessary for an individual, for a community it is a matter of life and death. The West owes its supremacy to its development of physical resources and study of natural phenomena, and one of the main causes of Eastern decadence is the neglect of science which has led to political and economic disintegration. The history of the Arabs shows the dire consequences resulting from a neglect of science by any people. During the heyday of their progress the Arabs led the people of the world in the study and cultivation of science. Biffault says: "Science is the most momentous contribution of Arab civilisation to the modern world. Nowhere is this (*i.e.*, the decisive influence of Islamic culture) so clear and momentous as in the genesis of that power which constitutes the distinctive force of the modern world and the supreme source of its victory—natural science and the scientific spirit." But when Arabs came under the influence of pseudo-mystics and scholastics and began neglecting the sciences, they soon lost the prominent position they had attained in the world. Referring to this pernicious influence, Dr. Sachau has remarked: "Were it not for al-Ash'ari

and al-Ghazali the Arabs would have been a nation of Galileos and Newtons." The result of their neglect of science was that they had to make room for the European nations.

(vii) *Development of the communal ego.*—In order to attain stability and prosperity the society must develop its collective ego just like an individual, and this is rendered possible by keeping up the traditions. To see the important part played by traditions in the life of a group, one has only to look at the history of the Jews. This small community has been harassed in all countries for centuries, and at times the prospects of its survival have looked very slender indeed; still the Jews have weathered all oppression successfully. Disraeli speaks thus of his people: "Expatriation, exile, captivity, confiscation, torture of the most ingenious type and massacres on the most extensive scale, a curious system of degrading customs and debasing laws which would have broken the heart of any other people, have been tried in vain." Why have all these attempts to extirpate this small community, with no resources except its own ingenuity, failed? Because through all their trials and tribulations the Jews have remained faithful to their past traditions. During the period of prosperity every community creates certain healthy traditions and in the gloomy days of adversity the community can do no better than to stick to these traditions till there is a turn in the tide.

(viii) *Maternity.*—To understand the importance of maternity one has only to

look at the increasing flood of literature published in every country during recent times advocating bigger families. According to Iqbal, gold and silver do not constitute any people's wealth ; the real wealth of a community is in its sons, active, virile, hardworking and quick in mental grasp. Arthur Bryant says in *English Saga* : "England is now learning again that neither wealth nor power nor comfort, whether for class or individual, are ends in themselves : that the wealth of a nation consists in nothing but the virtue of her children and children's children." If this is so not only does maternity need protection and encouragement but it must be honoured. Every country in the world is doing that today. The substantial prizes offered to persons with the largest families and honour given to women with the largest number of children proves that the modern world has come to realise the importance of maternity which Iqbal preached a quarter of a century ago. This is all the more remarkable when one recollects that until recently European nations were still insisting on birth-control, and the change in their attitude towards maternity has been brought about only recently. By discouraging maternity some European nations have been led to the commission of political suicide, and others have been guilty of grave disservice to their culture and history. They have thereby denied themselves the important role they were, by their past achievements, entitled to play in the affairs of the world. Helen Jackson has expressed the importance of maternity in the following beautiful and inspiring words :—



“ A woman who creates and sustains a home, and under whose hands children grow up to be strong and pure men and women, is a creator second only to God.”

It will be seen from what has been written above that Iqbal in his philosophy of ego has not only provided a complete scheme for the development of individuals but has also prescribed the essentials of the society, which on the one hand will help the development of the individual and, on the other, provide best scope for the creative unfolding of man's individuality. He goes further and lays down the rules which will help a society, which through its negligence or misdeeds falls on evil days, to tide over the period of decadence. Now there remains only one phase of human activity which has vexed philosophers and thinkers of all ages and times, the relationship of man with his Creator. Here we enter the domain of mysticism. The East and particularly Muslims, possess a vast literature on this subject, but considerations of space do not permit us to deal with the subject beyond a mere reference. As has been pointed out above, Love, which exercises such great influence on the development of ego, really means an attempt to assimilate and absorb the qualities of the beloved. The Love that one ego feels for a more developed ego tends to its fortification and evolution. But the most developed and perfect Ego is God, our Lord, the First Author of Beauty, the source of all egos. The Love for this First Author of Beauty is the highest form of Love both in quality and results. Muslim mystics have called it '*Ishq-i-ḥaqīqī*' or Real Love. Most of these

mystics recognise three stages of this Love :—

- (i) Yearning.
- (ii) Vision.
- (iii) Absorption.

Iqbal differs from these mystics in one important detail. He recognises only two stages of Divine Love (i) Yearning, and (ii) Vision. According to him there is no absorption ; and with such emphasis does he deride the idea of the human ego disappearing in the Divine Ego in a sort of spiritual communion that he will not even care to have immortality if that is going to mean a loss of his personality in any way whatsoever. In this connection he says :

اگر یک ذرہ کم گردد ز انگیز وجود من  
بہ این قیمت نہ می گیرم حیات جاودانی را

Even if one iota is to be diminished from my being,  
I shall not accept life immortal at this price.

So jealous is he of his personality that he is not prepared to exchange it even with divine personality.

متاع بے باہ در دوسو ز آرزو مندی  
مقام بندگی دے کر نہ لوں شان خداوندی

The pangs of yearning constitute a priceless commodity,  
I shall not exchange my humanity even for divinity !

Most mystic writers of the world have referred to this absorption as the goal of human existence like a drop slipping into the ocean from which it had originated. They always ask how the Infinite and the finite egos can mutually exclude each other.

Let us quote Iqbal :

“ But how can the Infinite and the finite egos mutually exclude each other ? Can the finite ego, as such, retain its finitude besides the Infinite Ego ? This difficulty is based on a misunderstanding of the true nature of the infinite. True infinity does not mean infinite extension which cannot be conceived without embracing all available finite extensions. Its nature consists in intensity and not extensity; and the moment we fix our gaze on intensity, we begin to see that the finite ego must be *distinct* though not *isolated* from the Infinite. Extensively regarded I am absorbed by the spatio-temporal order as a confronting ‘ other ’ wholly alien to me. I am distinct from and yet intimately related to that on which I depend for my life and sustenance.” \*

Iqbal has described the two stages of yearning and vision in lines of great beauty and charm. Yearning is the formative period in which the ego prepares itself for the vision. But this formative period is in itself one of great enjoyment.

سوز و گداز حالتی است بادہ زمں طلب کنی

پیش تو گر بیان کنم مستی این مقام را

Burning and yearning represent a stage, you will beg me  
for some wine,  
If I were to describe before you the ecstasy of this condition.

عالم سوز و سازیں وصل سے بڑھ کر ہے فراق

وصل میں مرگ آرزو بھر میں لذت طلب

In the world of yearning and burning separation is better  
than attainment,  
Attainment means the death of desire ; in separation are the  
joys of seeking.

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 112.

As regards vision, while it gives rise to emotional poise and tranquillity in one sphere, it also tends to add to the human ego's restlessness in the other sphere. In the stage of yearning every ego is striving for the goal of God's presence, but this can be achieved only by those egos which are properly fortified and disciplined. Ghazālī says: "Hard, hard it is to essay the discovery of the Lights Supernal that are beyond the veil." When the veil is removed the ego sees the majesty of the Divine Glory and the splendours of the Countenance Sublime. But unless the human ego is sufficiently fortified and developed, the results of the vision, even if it is attained, may be disastrous. Iqbal says :

"And the climax of this development is reached when the ego is able to retain full self-possession, even in the case of direct contact with the all-embracing Ego."\*

موسیٰ زہوش رفت یک جلوه صفات  
تو عین ذات می نگری در تبسمی

Moses fainted away by a mere surface illumination of  
Reality  
Thou seest the very substance of Reality with a smile !

Iqbal describes the Vision in the following lines :

کمال زندگی دیدار ذات است  
طریق رستن از بند جهات است

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 111.

چنان با ذات حق خلوت گزینی  
 ترا او بیند و او را تو بینی  
 به خود محکم گزرا ند در حضورش  
 مشو ناپید اندر بحر نورش  
 چنان در جلوه گاه یار می سوز  
 عیان خود را نهان او را برافروز

The acme of life is a vision of the Absolute,  
 The only way to it is by conquest over dimensions.  
 Associate with God in such a way  
 That He sees thee and thou seest Him.  
 Maintain thyself strong in His presence,  
 Don't get lost in the flood of His light.  
 Burn in such a way in the parlour of the Beloved  
 That thou illumine thyself apparently and Him really.

Vision itself is nothing more than a momentary experience, but it is worth all the ordeals and all the preparation which it necessarily involves.

به دیگران چه سخن گسترم ز جلوه دوست  
 به یک نگاه مثال شراره می گزند

What can I talk to others of the Beloved's appearance,  
 Like a spark it lasts but for the twinkling of an eye.

We have given above in brief outline the gist of Iqbal's philosophy of ego, but if philosophy "is the unseen foundation on which the structure of a civilisation rests,"\* there is no phase of human

\* Sir S. Radhakrishnan : *Kalki or the Future of Civilisation*.

activity in which Iqbal does not provide us with guidance. But it is not possible for us to deal here with Iqbal's philosophy in general. That will need volumes. Still enough has been said to show that Iqbal's philosophy, preaching the gospel of self-reverence, brings a message of hope and cheer to humanity distracted and trammelled by its own greed and passion for aggrandisement. On the one hand, this philosophy preaches self-affirmation by individuals; on the other it prescribes suppression of perverse individualism which precludes any collective and concerted action. Iqbal prescribes the basis for human society on such spiritual considerations that even the deep and cruel cleavage of colour and race ceases to count. Iqbal is not content merely with turning kings into philosophers and philosophers into kings like Plato, he aims at turning every man into a *Faqīr*, and his *Faqīr* is something much more than Plato's Philosopher and King combined.

What more stirring words can be imagined than the following lines which describe man's great mission on this planet :

یہ عالم یہ ہنگامہ رنگ و صوت    یہ عالم کہ ہے زیر فرمان موت  
یہ عالم یہ بت خانہ چشم و گوش    جہاں زندگی ہے قحط خور و نوش  
خودی کی یہ ہے منزل اولیں    مسافر یہ تیرا نہیں  
بڑھے جایہ کوہ گراں توڑ کر    طلسم زمان و مکاں توڑ کر  
جہاں اور بھی ہیں ابھی بے نمود    کہ خالی نہیں ہے ضمیر و جود

ہر اک منتظر تیری یلغار کا تیری شوخی فکر و کردار کا  
یہ ہے مقصد گردش روزگار کہ تیری خودی سمجھ بہ ہو آشکار

This world, this riot of colour and sound,  
This universe which is subject to the rule of death.  
This world which is only a temple created by eyes and ears,  
Wherein life consists of naught but eating and drinking,  
This is the first halting stage for the ego,  
O traveller this is not meant to be thy abode !  
Advance on after breaking this great barrier,  
Solving the mysteries of Time and Space.  
There are other worlds unseen,  
And the essence of existence is not yet void ;  
Every one of them waiting for thy conquest,  
For the unbridled play of thy thought and action.  
The object of the passage of time is but one :  
To reveal to thee the possibilities of thy ego !

Before concluding, a reference must be made to a growing fashion amongst a section of Indians to belittle Iqbal's contribution to human thought and the world's literature by labelling him as a 'communalist.' This term has acquired a peculiar meaning in this country which, although difficult to grasp accurately, can perhaps be best described as a person whose sympathies are confined to a section of people and who cannot tolerate other people's aspirations and culture. That there is no grain of truth in this base accusation will be apparent from what has been written above. A thinker who considers tolerance as an important ingredient in the make-up of his supermen can never be regarded as a 'communalist' in the accepted sense of the term. The truth is that Iqbal has propounded a

philosophy for man's everyday conduct which teaches him, amongst other things, the art of living together. So far as laying down a theoretical scheme is concerned it can be done in abstract terms ; but when he wants to offer illustrations he has to turn back upon one of the existing social and religious systems. That no serious student of sociology can afford to ignore Islam as a system will be clear from the following remarks by a Christian missionary :

"The religion of Mahomet proclaimed the first real democracy ever conceived in the mind of man. His God was of such transcendent greatness that before Him all worldly differences were naught and even the deep and cruel cleavage of colour ceased to exist. There are social ranks among Muslims as elsewhere, but fundamentally (that is to say, spiritually) all believers are equal : and this fundamental spiritual equality is not a fiction as so commonly among Christians ; it is accepted and is real. This accounts very largely for its extraordinarily rapid spread among different peoples. It accounts for its strength today in Africa where the Christian missionary preaches an equality which is everywhere marked by the arrogance of the white races and the existence of the colour bar. The Muslim, black, brown or white alone finds himself accepted as a brother not according to his colour but his creed." \*

It will not be correct to say that Milton's writings are meant to be enjoyed only by the Christians because his conception of life is essentially Christian and because his illustrations are all drawn from the Bible. None can underrate the universal appeal of *Shākuntala* because the characters in it think and act

\* Dr. Maude Royden : *The Problem of Palestine*, p. 37, published by Hutchinson and W. Ltd.



essentially as Hindus. Iqbal once wrote to a European scholar : " The object of my Persian poems is not to plead for Islam. Really I am keenly interested in the search for a better social order ; and in this search it is simply impossible to ignore an actually existing social system the main object of which is to abolish all distinctions of race, caste and colour." Perhaps it is unnecessary to emphasise that no thinker absorbed in evolving a system for the regeneration of humanity could ignore an existing system which has served to abolish all artificial barriers between man and man, has always espoused the cause of the down-trodden by removing all disabilities, social, economic and political, and has given to humanity a message of freedom, social equality and human brotherhood. That Iqbal always had non-Muslims too in his mind when preaching his message will be evident from the following lines :

من نه گویم از بتان بیزار شو    کافری شائسته ز نار شو  
ای امانت دار تهذیب کن    پشت پابر مسلک آبا مزن  
گرز جمعیت حیات ملت است    کفر هم سرمایه جمعیت است  
تو که هم در کافری کامل نه    در خور طوف حریم دل نه  
مانده ایم از جاده تسلیم دور    تو ز آذر من ز ابراهیم دور

I do not bid thee abandon thine idols. [of unbelief !  
Art thou an unbeliever ? Then be worthy of the badge  
O inheritor of ancient culture,

Turn not thy back on the path thy fathers trod !  
If a people's life is derived from unity,  
Unbelief too is a source of unity.  
Thou, that art not even a perfect infidel,  
Art unfit to worship at the shrine of the spirit.  
We both are far astray from the road of devotion :  
Thou art far from Azar, and I from Abraham.

### CHAPTER III

## IQBAL AND EASTERN THOUGHT

نکردم از کسی دریوزه چشم جهان را جز به چشم خود ندیدم

I never begged anyone for eyes to see with,  
I have not looked at the Universe except with my own eyes.

WE have seen that the basis of Iqbal's philosophy is the human ego. Iqbal is struck by the fact that there is individuality in everything that lives or exists ; the stars of heaven and the things of earth are all, according to Iqbal, individuals and do not merge in each other, but they do not possess individuality in an equal degree. Individuality is an upward movement through which all living objects and things pass. It marches up the ascending scale of life until it reaches man and in him it becomes personality. Fortification of personality enables the ego to conquer environment and space on the one hand and time on the other, and to approach the greatest Ego of all egos—God in His attributes, and thus produce superman. Thus the basis of Iqbal's philosophy is a strong faith in the evolution of man in three directions : attainment of personal freedom, attainment of personal immortality and production of perfect man. And as the human ego can develop only in association with other egos and not in isolation, Iqbal's philosophy lays down the essentials of the society most conducive to the development of the ego. As Iqbal's philosophy deals with matters concerning the very destiny of mankind, other thinkers in East and West have also given their

thoughts to the various problems considered in Iqbal's philosophy. To trace the affinities of Iqbal's thought with that of other great thinkers will be tantamount to tracing the history of human thought from the earliest times to the present day, and cannot be attempted here. All that can be attempted is to trace briefly the affinity between the main trends of Iqbal's philosophy of ego and the thought of prominent figures in the history of human thought. These affinities give us in some instances an idea of the sources of Iqbal's thought, but tracing the sources of a great thinker's philosophy is in itself an extremely hazardous task ; and we would be well-advised not to rush to any hasty conclusions. As remarked by Sir Thomas Arnold : " Sir Muḥammed Iqbal in spite of his learning and his wide reading is no mere echo of other men's ideas but is distinctly an original thinker."\*

The sources which exhibit certain points of affinity with Iqbal's thought can be grouped as below :

A. *Eastern :*

(1) Islamic sources :

(a) The Qur'ān and the Prophet's Traditions.

(b) Mystic writers :

(i) Theists like Maulānā Rūmī and al-Ghazālī.

(ii) Neo-Platonists like Ibnul 'Arabī and al-Jīlī.

(c) Scholastic theologians.

(2) Non-Islamic sources :

\* Sir Thomas Arnold : *Islamic Faith*, p. 77.

B. *Western* :—

- (1) Greek philosophers.
- (2) German idealists like Kant and Fichte.
- (3) Modern European philosophers like Nietzsche and Bergson.

We shall deal here with the Eastern sources. But before proceeding further it may be mentioned that while we are here concerned mainly with tracing affinities, as a rule Iqbal with his dynamic philosophy differs from Eastern thinkers more often than he agrees with them.

Iqbal has left copious notes in his writings to enable us to trace the connection between his philosophy and the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān recognises individuality by the simple fact of refusing to admit the doctrine of redemption. The Qur'ān lays down in unmistakable terms that it is impossible for one individual to bear the burden of another :

Every soul draws the meed  
Of its acts on none  
But itself : no bearer  
Of burdens can bear  
The burden of another.

VI : 164.

Further, every individual is entitled only to what is due to his own personal effort :

Then guard yourself against a Day,  
When one soul shall not avail another,  
Nor shall compensation be accepted from her  
Nor shall intercession profit her,  
Nor shall any one be helped from outside.

(II : 123).

Affirmation of individuality could not have been more emphatically stated :

We did indeed offer  
The Trust to the Heavens  
And the Earth  
And the Mountains ;  
But they refused to undertake it,  
Being afraid thereof :  
But man undertook it ;  
He was indeed unjust  
And foolish.

XXXIII : 72.

As regards the attainment of freedom by the human ego, the Qur'ān recognises that the ego is a free personal causality. The Ultimate Ego, by permitting the emergence of an ego with the capacity for initiative, has to a certain extent restricted His own freedom :

Say, " The Truth is  
From Your Lord. "  
Let him who will,  
Believe, and let him  
Who will, reject it.

XVIII : 29.

Indeed the laying down of regular daily prayers is also meant as a means of the ego's escape from mechanism to freedom. By understanding and mastering its environment, the ego acquires and amplifies its freedom. The whole Universe is meant to be subjugated by man who thereby attains freedom :

Do ye not see  
That God has subjected  
To your use all things

In the heavens and on earth,  
 And has made His bounties  
 Flow to you in exceeding  
 Measure, both seen and unseen ?

XXXI : 20.

The vital way of approaching the Universe is what the Qur'ān describes as '*Imān*.'

According to the Qur'ān, it is open to man to attain immortality under certain circumstances, but man has to work for it :

By the Soul,  
 And the proportion and order  
 Given to it ;  
 And its enlightenment  
 And to its wrong  
 And its right ;  
 Truly he succeeds  
 That purifies it,  
 And he fails  
 That corrupts it.

XCI : 7-10.

And what is the best way of making the soul grow and of saving it from corruption : the way of action.

Blessed be He  
 In Whose hands  
 Is Dominion ;  
 And He over all things  
 Hath Power ;—  
 He Who created Death  
 And Life, that He  
 May try which of you  
 Is best in deed :  
 And He is the Exalted  
 In Might, Oft—Forgiving.

LXVII : 1-2.

As we have seen, according to Iqbal, life offers scope for ego-activity and death provides the first test of the synthetic activity of the ego. It is only action that prepares the ego either for dissolution or disciplines him for a future career. Personal immortality can thus be achieved by personal effort, but we have to work for it.

As regards the Perfect Man or Superman, the idea is suffused throughout the Qur'ān. The following verses clearly refer to the Supermen :

Ye are the best  
Of Peoples, evolved  
For mankind,  
Enjoying what is right,  
Forbidding what is wrong,  
And believing in God.

III : 110.

The following verses refer to the possibility of God producing Supermen :

That We can certainly  
Substitute for them  
Better men than they.

LXX : 40-41.

It is not possible to give a detailed definition of the Superman in the Qur'ānic language without giving long and numerous extracts but the main attributes of the Superman are summarised beautifully in the following lines :

Soon will God produce  
A people whom He will love  
As they will love Him,—  
Lowly with the Believers,  
Mighty against the Rejectors,  
Fighting in the Way of God.



And never afraid  
Of the reproaches  
Of such as find fault.

V : 57.

No detailed discussion is needed here to show how closely the Perfect Man as envisaged in the above lines resembles Iqbal's Superman.

There is one more parallelism between the Qur'ānic philosophy and Iqbal's thought which should be mentioned here. Iqbal describes the three stages for the development of the ego as :

1. Obedience to the Law.
2. Self-control.
3. Divine Vicegerency.

Obedience to law and self-control are extolled in the Qur'ān in several places. As regards the vicegerency of God it is clear from the Qur'ān that man, with all his faults, is meant to be the representative of God on earth :

Behold, thy Lord said to the angels : " I will create  
A vicegerent on earth." They said :  
" Wilt Thou place therein one who will make  
Mischief therein and shed blood ?—  
Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises  
And glorify Thy holy (name) ? "  
He said : " I know what ye know not. "

II : 30.

Further on the Qur'ān says :

It is He Who hath made  
You His agents, inheritors  
Of the earth : He hath raised  
You in rank, some above  
Others : that He may try you :  
In the gifts He hath given you.

VI : 165.

According to Iqbal the human ego can develop only in association with other egos and not in isolation. The ego must adjust its social activities to the common good of society, and must not limit its vision to any form of personal profit at the expense of the common good. The adjustment of personal activity to social good is also beneficial to the ego itself because thus only can it achieve its highest possibilities. This in itself is exactly in accordance with Qur'ānic teachings. The Qur'ān lays down :

“ And hold fast,  
All together, by the Rope  
Which God (stretches out  
For you), and be not divided  
Among yourselves.”

III : 103.

Moreover the society best suited to achieve the development of the ego and prescribed by Iqbal also follows the lines laid down for human societies in the Qur'ān. To trace in details the affinity between the Qur'ānic teaching and Iqbal's philosophy will need a volume, but enough has been said above to indicate that in essentials the germs of Iqbal's philosophy are found in the Qur'ān.

As regards the Prophet's sayings we have the well-known saying :

مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ

“ He who knows his self, knows his God.”

This saying concentrates one's thought on one's self or the ego, which is the basis of Iqbal's philoso-

phy. As regards the development of the ego the Prophet has prescribed for this تَخَلَّقُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ  
 "Create in yourselves the Divine attributes." He who comes nearest to God is the completest person, according to Iqbal. Similarly the Prophet's whole life was spent in action, which is the kernel of Iqbal's philosophy. Whenever Iqbal extols hardness it is supposed that he is borrowing ideas from modern European philosophers, but he has himself said :

از بلا ترسی؟ حدیث مصطفیٰ است

مرد را روز بلا روز صفاست

Thou art afraid of trouble ? The Prophet has said :  
 'To a man the day of trouble is the day of purification.'

When describing the Muslim conception of Time Iqbal always used to refer to the Prophet's saying : " Don't vilify Time."

Of all the Muslim mystics Iqbal shows most points of correspondence with the great mystic poet, Jalālud-Dīn Rūmī, popularly known as Maulānā Rūmī. The great poem of Maulānā Rūmī is the *Mathnawī* which is held in such high esteem that it is known as the Qur'ān in the Persian language. Maulānā Rūmī was born at Balkh on 30th September, 1207, where his father Bahaud-Dīn was held in great esteem by the King Muḥammad Khwarizm Shah. But Khwarizm Shah had as his minister the famous Muslim philosopher, Imām Rāzī, who looked askance at Bahaud-Dīn's unorthodox methods. One day when the King and Imām Rāzī went to









attended Bahaud-Dīn's lecture, there was a very big crowd, and the King remarked on this. Imām Rāzī, who was waiting for an opportunity, replied that unless steps were taken soon, the prestige of the King would be in danger in view of Bahaud-Dīn's growing influence. So, the next day the King sent the keys of the Royal treasury to Bahaud-Dīn saying, "You can have these also." Bahaud-Dīn took the hint and sent word that he would be leaving Balkh on the following Friday, and this he did. After staying in Nishapūr and Baghdad, Bahaud-Dīn moved on to Quniya and died there. In 1279 A.D. Maulānā Rūmī went to Halab for studies. Later on he settled down in Quniya and came under the influence of Shamsi-Tabrīz. His magnum opus the *Mathnawī* was undertaken at the request of his friend and disciple, Hisāmud-Dīn Chalpī. Maulānā died on 16th December 1273, and was buried in Quniya.

(To Iqbal Rūmī is what Virgil was to Dante. Both *Asrār-i-Khudī* and *Rumūz-i-Bekhūdī* are composed in the metre and modelled on the style of Maulānā Rūmī's well-known *Mathnawī*. In the prologue to *Asrār-i-Khudī*, Iqbal relates how Maulānā Rūmī appeared in a vision and bade him arise and sing. As a foreword to *Rumūz-i-Bekhūdī*, he adopted the following lines from the *Dīwān-i-Shamsi Tabrīz* :

دی شیخ با چراغِ همی گشت گردشگر  
کز دام و دودِ ملولم و انسایم آرزوست  
زین هرمان سست عناصر دلم گرفت



شیر خدا و رستم دستانم آرزوست  
گفتم که یافت می نشود جستہ ایم ما  
گفت آنکہ یافت می نشود آئم آرزوست

Yesterday the master with a lantern was roaming about  
the city,  
Saying "I am tired of devil and beast. I desire a man!  
My heart is weary of these weak-spirited companions.  
I desire the Lion of God and Rustam son of Zal." [long."  
They said, "He is not to be found, we have sought Him  
He said, "A thing that is not to be found—that is what I  
desire."

These lines are now reproduced on the frontispiece of the combined edition of *Asrār* and *Rumūz*.

In a poem in *Payām-i-Mashriq*, Iqbal gives us an interesting dialogue between Goethe and Rūmī in Heaven. According to Iqbal, the theme of *Faust* and the *Mathnawī* is one and the same. In *Jāvid-Nāmāh*, Rūmī accompanies Iqbal to the various planets and to Heaven, and in his comments on all that he shows to Iqbal, Rūmī elucidates eternal truths. In *Bāl-i-Jibra'īl*, Iqbal assumes the role of a disciple and calls himself *Murīd-i-Hindī* and addresses Rūmī as a guide and philosopher and expresses feelings of esteem bordering on adoration. What is the cause of this great esteem in which Iqbal holds Rūmī? Rūmī has always been regarded as exercising a potent influence on Muslim thought, his *Mathnawī* even if not properly understood, is read in every school and mosque throughout the Muslim world. There is a spiritual order known

as the Maulviā which professes extreme loyalty to Rūmī. But there must be some special reason for a modern thinker like Iqbal showing all this admiration and adoration for Rūmī. We all admire that with which we agree. So we must assume that there are points of agreement between Rūmī and Iqbal and should try to find out these points.

The study of Rūmī presents special difficulties owing to his manner of exposition. Nothing less than a thorough study of the six volumes of his *Mathnawī* will reveal to the student the ideas of this great mystic. Rūmī does not state his *Weltanschauung* in so many words, and so a student has to go through the voluminous *Mathnawī* to pick up his meaning. To illustrate the difficulties in understanding Rūmī one has only to point out the mistakes made by great scholars when interpreting him. Professor R. A. Nicholson of Cambridge who has been a student of Rūmī all his life, wrote in 1920 in his Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*:

“Much as he (Iqbal) dislikes the type of Sufism exhibited by Ḥāfiẓ he pays homage to the pure and profound genius of Jalālud-Dīn though he rejects the doctrine of self-abandonment taught by the great mystic and does not accompany him in his pantheistic flights.”\*

But in 1923 he wrote:

“Neither the theologian nor the poet is a pantheist. From *Ghazālī* we get the sense and doctrine, from Jalālud-Dīn the sentiment, faith, and experience of personal religion. I am aware that, as regards Jalālud-Dīn this judgement may appear questionable to those who have read certain passages in the *Diwānī-Shamsi Tabrīz* where he describes his oneness with God in terms which look pantheistic at first sight

\* Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xi (Third Edition).

and which I myself understood in a pantheistic sense at a time when I knew less about the history of Sufism than I do now."\*

Maulānā Shiblī Nu'mānī, the great Indian scholar has been a lifelong student of Persian literature in general and of poetry in particular, and has written an illuminating sketch on Rūmī. In this sketch Maulānā Shiblī says that Rūmī believes in unityism and pantheism. Even these great Orientalists who devoted their lifetime to the study of Rūmī found it difficult to understand the true import of his thought. Iqbal was perhaps the first great writer of repute to interpret Rūmī correctly, which is proved by the fact that his interpretation has been upheld by other scholars.

Rūmī preaches a life of ceaseless activity and endless struggling to attain personal freedom and immortality. He goes even so far as to say :

کوشش بی سودہ بہ از خفتگی

Useless striving is better than inaction.

Summing up Rūmī's views a scholar has remarked: "So God is not an abstract and absolutely attributeless Being who sits behind the screen eternally unmoved. According to Rūmī 'He is the most active Being and loves activity. Every day He is busy with something new. The sovereign ruling the Universe cannot sit idle. He loves movement; therefore, even a useless effort is better than utter passivity. What an utter refutation of quietism, generally considered to be inseparable from mysti-

\* R. A. Nicholson : *The Idea of Personality in Sufism*.

cism.”\* Thus Iqbal and Rūmī agree in preaching a life of ceaseless activity and endeavour. Besides this there is great resemblance between the views of Iqbal and Rūmī on the following points amongst others :

- (1) Perfect or Ideal man.
- (2) Love.
- (3) Achievement of immortality.
- (4) Relationship between the finite ego and the Infinite Ego.

Rūmī describes his Perfect or Ideal man as follows :

“ The Ideal man is one who has realised his transcendental or eternal self which is uncreated and divine.”

“ It is possible for every individual to realise it, it is the end and goal of life.”

“ The Ideal man is in immediate touch with God ; neither prophets nor angels intervene between the two.”

“ The Ideal man can work miracles which do not mean the annihilation of causation but only bringing into play causes that are not within the reach of common experience.”

“ The Adam of the Qur’ān represents the Ideal man to whom the angels paid homage. The Ideal man does not represent only a possibility. In every age there is someone who has realised it.”

Both Iqbal and Rūmī agree that it is open to us all to be Perfect men, and these individuals do not represent any aristocracy. According to both the Perfect man can work miracles, and Iqbal goes even so far as to assert that the Perfect man is a miracle in himself. While Rūmī maintains that in every age there is an individual who is an Ideal man, Iqbal is silent on this, and according to him it is not

\* Dr. Khalifa ‘Abdul Hakīm : *The Metaphysics of Rūmī*, p. 109.

essential that in every age there should be someone who represents the Ideal man. While Rūmī is inclined to describe his Ideal man in mystical language suitable to his age, Iqbal describes him in terms of matter and universe, more in keeping with the knowledge of the physical world today. This is natural when we realise the different times in which the two thinkers lived.

Love, according to Iqbal and Rūmī, is the greatest force in human life. It is indescribable in any language, and any attempt to describe it merely makes it more baffling. As mentioned already Iqbal uses the term 'Love' in a very wide sense, and the main feature of Love as understood by him is an intense desire on the part of a lover to assimilate the qualities and virtues of the beloved. Rūmī also emphasises the assimilating feature of Love. In fact his interpretation of assimilation as a process of Love leads him to build up hopes about the fortification of the ego. Love presents a paradox inasmuch as in it by giving we take and by dying we live. This is represented by inorganic matter ceasing to exist as such as it assumes organic life in a plant, which in its turn can become a part of animal life. So Rūmī argues that, if by assimilation matter can progress to man, there can be no obstacle in the way of evolution of man to the Infinite Ego by acquiring the qualities of God.

As regards the achievement of immortality, Rūmī, like other Islamic mystics, has a strong belief in the survival of personality. He maintains that real immortality is association with God by getting

rid of limited and conditioned individuality. The essence of the individual survives although his attributes may be merged in the divine attributes. The individual is lost as the candle or the stars are lost in the morning in the overwhelming effulgence of the light of the sun. To illustrate annihilation of the self by being clothed with divine attributes, Rūmī uses the analogy of red hot iron in fire. The iron takes the properties of fire without entirely losing its own individual essence. In that state it can claim to be fire as well as iron. Rūmī's conception of immortality follows from his conception of the transcendental self and from his idealistic premises. As man is afraid of death because he considers himself to be a part of phenomenal nature, Rūmī wants to convince man that his real self, far from being a product of nature, is the source of all nature. In his transcendental aspect man is already immortal, and by development he can achieve personal immortality. There is complete agreement between Iqbal and Rūmī regarding this.

As regards the relationship of the finite ego to the Infinite Ego, as Rūmī's God is not an absorbent unity so "living in Him and losing in Him" too does not mean the merging of the drop in the ocean. Rūmī never talks of the annihilation of the human individuality. Here also there is perfect agreement between Iqbal and Rūmī.

We need not mention the minor points on which these two great writers and thinkers agree. Enough has been said to show that so far as the fundamentals of his philosophy are concerned Iqbal agrees with

Rūmī, while both agree with the Qur'ān.

A passing reference has already been made to the fact that Iqbal developed his philosophy of the ego as a reaction to Ibnul 'Arabī's mystical philosophy of unityism, but here we have to trace the points of affinity between the philosophy of Ibnul 'Arabī and Iqbal.

Shaikh Muḥyid-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn-'Alī commonly known as Ibnul 'Arabī and Ash-Shaikh-ul-Akbar was born at Murcia (South-East of Spain) in 1164. At the age of eight he went to Lisbon for studies. Here he received his early Muslim education from Shaikh Abu-Bakr. He then moved to Seville where he remained for thirty years studying Islamic Law, Tradition, and Theology. While in residence at Seville he travelled much and visited, among other places, Cordova and met Averroes there. At the age of thirty-eight he started for the East, finally reaching Damascus where he died in 1240. While Ibnul 'Arabī will always be remembered mainly as a scholar who through his personality and learning made neo-Platonic ideas popular in Islam, if for nothing else, here we have to trace the few points of affinity between him and Iqbal. Ibnul 'Arabī developed a theory of Logos. This theory comprises the following elements :

(i) The Logos as the Reality of Realities : the metaphysical aspect.

(ii) The Logos as the Reality of Muḥammad : the mystical aspect ; and

(iii) The Logos as the Perfect man : the

human aspect.\*

We are here only interested in Perfect man, or Superman to use a modern term, mainly to show that the subject has always engaged the attention of Muslim mystics, philosophers, writers, and thinkers. According to Ibnul 'Arabī, the Perfect man is an actual microcosm because he does actually manifest all God's attributes and perfections and such manifestation is incomplete without the full realisation of his essential unity with God. According to Ibnul 'Arabī the Perfect man is a miniature of reality. But the question naturally arises; in what does the perfection of the Perfect man really consist? Is he perfect in knowledge or being or in both? Is the Perfect man perfect because he is a perfect manifestation of God, or because in his mystical experience he realises his oneness with God? Ibnul 'Arabī confuses the two issues, although he evidently means both. This doctrine of the Logos was developed subsequently by 'Abdul-Karīm al-Jīlī, but before referring to this development we would draw attention to another point on which Ibnul 'Arabī and Iqbal agree. They both maintain that Heaven and Hell are states and not localities. According to Iqbal "their descriptions in the Qur'ān are representations of an inner fact, i.e., character."† While the two actually differ in their definitions of Hell and Heaven, they agree that they do not represent any localities. According to Iqbal,

\* Those interested in the philosophy of Ibnul 'Arabī are referred to the excellent monograph "*The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid-Din-Ibnul 'Arabī*", by Dr. A. E. Affili, published by the Cambridge University Press.

† *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 116.



Hell is not a pit of everlasting torture inflicted by a revengeful God, it is merely a corrective experience. Nor is Heaven a holiday. Man marches always onward to receive everfresh illuminations from an Infinite Reality. According to Ibnul 'Arabī there is no real difference between Heaven and Hell. The only difference is that the blessed who are supposed to sojourn in Heaven will behold the Beautiful vision of the Epiphany and apprehend it on its first vision, while the damned who are supposed to sojourn in Hell will not be able to recognise it until the veils are removed. Once the veils are removed even this difference will disappear.\*

About a century and a half after Ibnul 'Arabī there flourished another mystical writer, 'Abdul-Karīm al-Jīlī who developed the doctrine of the Logos in a classical form in his theory of the *Insānul Kāmil*. Al-Jīlī was born in 1366 and died in 1408. He was not a prolific writer, but like Iqbal he combined in himself poetical imagination and philosophical genius. We are here concerned mainly with his well-known work, *Insānul Kāmil*. Al-Jīlī is a very discursive writer, and his treatise is full of digressions, hence it is not easy to grasp the fundamentals of his criteria for a Perfect man. But luckily we have before us the result of patient studies by Iqbal and Nicholson. The following brief outline is mainly based on Iqbal's *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*. According to al-Jīlī, name fixes the named in the understanding and creates a

\* It is not proposed to discuss here whether these views are in agreement with the orthodox Muslim views or the Qur'ān. All that is intended is to state similarity between views held by Iqbal and Ibnul 'Arabī.

picture in the mind which lasts in memory and can be vividly imagined. There is one Being which exists in two modes, the absolute free from manifestation, and the qualified which is manifest. The absolute (*wujūd mutlaq*) is devoid of all qualities and relations and exists enveloped in cecity. The first step in its manifestation is when it emerges from darkness without becoming externally manifest, and is a unity comprehending diversity. This stage can be best described as that of oneness. This is soon followed by the stage which can be described as that of He-ness (*Huwiya*). Here the Absolute Being is still free from all manifestation. The third stage I-ness is nothing but an external manifestation of the He-ness. Here the Absolute Being becomes conscious. The Divinity is the highest manifestation of the absolute, it is actually a name for the sum of all the attributes. Al-Jīlī says further that the name Allah is the substance of all the perfection of the different phases of Divinity.

Man in perfection is the image of God. He is a mirror reflecting His names and attributes. He is the microcosm in which the absolute becomes conscious of itself in all its diverse parts. How is man to attain this perfection? By spiritual training and mystical ascent. As the absolute descends by many stages into man, man by ascent returns to the Divine. The process of ascent or perfection has three stages. In the first stage man meditates on the names of God. In the second stage he steps into the sphere of the attributes, and here he begins to participate in the divine attributes and acquires

miraculous powers. In the third stage he crosses the domain of names and attributes, and enters the sphere of the Essence-Absolute and becomes perfect God-man or '*Insān-i-Kāmil*.' His eye becomes the eye of God, his word the word of God, and his life the life of God.

In this connection it will be interesting to mention that as early as 1902 Iqbal wrote an article on Perfect man based on 'Abdul-Karim Jili's *Insānul-Kāmil*. This article was published in the *Indian Antiquary* of Bombay. Later on, Iqbal incorporated this article in his book *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, but the original article is not available today. Thus it will be seen that the subject of Perfect man was very popular with the Muslim writers—mystics, metaphysicians and theologians. They discussed the whole subject mainly from the mystical point of view, and Iqbal became conversant with most of the literature on the subject very early in his career. Besides those mentioned above, there are others who have written on the subject but it is unnecessary to mention them all here. Sufficient has been said to prove that Iqbal first became acquainted with the idea of Perfect man or Superman through his Islamic studies.

It has been remarked above that the background to Iqbal's philosophy is provided by the strong reaction he showed to the doctrine of unityism. We have also mentioned that Ibnul 'Arabī affirmed the pantheistic doctrine of unityism or *waḥdat-al-uwjūd*. The first great writer to oppose this doctrine was Taqiyyud-Dīn Ibn-Taymiyya who was

born at Harran in 1263 A.D. A few years later Ibn-Taymiyya's father, fleeing before the Mughals brought him to Damascus, where in due course he received an excellent education. It is said that he never forgot anything which he had once learnt, and his knowledge of theology and law was very extensive. His aim was to restore the pristine monotheism taught by the Prophet and to purge Islam of heresies and corruptions. Bowing to no authority, but drawing his arguments from the traditions and practice of the early church, he expressed his convictions in the most forcible terms, without regard to consequences. Although several times thrown into prison, he could not be muzzled for long. He ended his days in captivity at Damascus. His funeral was largely attended ; they say 200,000 men and 15,000 women were actually present. The principles which inspired Ibn-Taymiyya did not fall to the ground with his death, although the immediate effect of his teachings was confined to a very small circle.

It was left to the great mystic, Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī, to launch a campaign against the pantheistic conception in India. Shaikh Aḥmad was born in 1564. He received his early education at home and later on went to renowned scholars at various places for the study of Traditions, Exegesis and philosophy. When he was at Agra, Ab'ul-Faḍl and Faiḍī, Emperor Akbar's right hand men, wanted to draw him in their circle. But this friendship did not last long because the Shaikh disapproved of Ab'ul-Faḍl's religious views. After finishing his education, the

Shaikh took to mystic discipline under the guidance of his father, and later on joined the *Naqshbandiya* order under Khwaja Bāqi-Billah. About this time Muslim society in India was passing through a crisis ; and the times required the appearance of a great reformer. This reformer appeared in the person of Shaikh Aḥmad, who, at the age of forty, felt the call. He started a campaign which went on gaining in impetus, so much so that Emperor Jehangir decided to suppress the campaign by imprisoning Shaikh Aḥmad after sending away to distant parts of the Empire those nobles who were devoted to the Shaikh. But the imprisonment greatly annoyed Mahābat Khan the Governor of Kabul who rose in rebellion and virtually took Jehangir a prisoner at Jhelum. Under Shaikh's behest Mahābat Khan released Jehangir. Jehangir soon set the Shaikh free, who thereafter became the special adviser of the king.

The conception of *waḥdat-i-shahūd* was developed by the Mujaddid as a challenge to *waḥdat-al wujūd* or the unityism of Ibnul 'Arabī, the leader of pantheistic mystics in Islam. Ibnul 'Arabī held that Being is one, it is that only which exists. This Being is Allah, and everything else is His manifestation. Hence the world is identical with Allah, and the relation between the world and God, according to Ibnul 'Arabī, is one of identity. In establishing this identification he proceeds either from the negation of the world or from the affirmation of God. On the basis of negation of the world Ibnul 'Arabī holds that the world as such is unreal,

imaginary, objectively non-existent, and it is God alone that exists. The Mujaddid on the other hand says that there is no likeness whatsoever between the Divine and the human attributes, God is wholly other than the world, and the world exists in reality. If the world is unreal all moral responsibility of man becomes meaningless. While Ibnul 'Arabī maintains that worship of any object whatsoever is the worship of Allah, the Mujaddid insists that there is absolutely no relation between the world and its unique Creator except that the world has been created by Him and is a sign that indicates His hidden attributes. According to the Mujaddid : " God produces the world, not out of Himself as *waḥdat-i-wujūd* or unityism would say, but out of nothing. Its being is due to an act of creation—creation out of nothing, which is something absolutely inconceivable for the speculative consciousness and its offshoot, viz., *waḥdat-i-wujūd*. And He gives it an existence of its own, which is not God's existence but other than it. So also He gives it certain qualities, consciousness, freedom, etc., which are not God's qualities but its. Thus it becomes an agent in its own right and therefore responsible for its actions. Being a mixture of *wujūd* and 'adam—of being and non-being,—it is essentially finite and limited though it has a yearning for improvement. Consequently, it needs religion ; and it needs a religious unity with all the attributes of perfection. However, being limited it cannot comprehend the infinite ; it cannot see God. It can only believe in Him—if God could be pleased to let it know that

He exists and wants him to act in such and such a manner. Revelation performs this function and opens the way to the realisation of the human yearning to live in harmony with Him and in His presence.”\*

Although the Mujaddid and Iqbal both condemn Ibnul ‘Arabī’s pantheistic doctrine of unityism, the real import of this agreement between the two lies in regarding life and the world as real and having an objective existence, against the pantheistic conception of the world as merely illusionary and imaginary. Later on Syed Aḥmad Brelvī also strongly condemned unityism, but by this time the whole controversy had assumed the role of a theoretical discussion with no obvious connection with everyday life. It was left for Iqbal to trace this connection and to deal with the havoc that this doctrine was causing to the whole life of a people.

There is great resemblance between the ideas of Iqbal and those of the Muslim divine, Imām al-Ghazālī, in the importance they place on intuition. Unfortunately Ghazālī failed to see any organic relationship between thought and intuition, and this failure forced him to draw a line of cleavage between thought and intuition, which, according to Iqbal, was a mistake. Ghazālī was born at Ṭūs in 1058 A.D. and died in 1111 A.D. He was at one time Professor at the Nizāmiah College, Baghḍād. He resigned his post at the Nizāmiah and set out on pilgrimage. After the pilgrimage he spent some time in travels and then returned to his native town of Ṭūs—intent on writing and worship and constant recitation

\* Dr. B. A. Faruqi: *The Mujaddid’s Conception of Tawḥīd*, p. 184.

of the Qur'ān. For some time he held a professorship at Nīshapūr but returned to end his days in his native town. Ghazālī's search for religious truth exercised a profound and momentous influence upon the future history of Muslim thought. 'In a very interesting passage, Ghazālī tells us how from his youth upward he was possessed with an intense thirst for knowledge, which impelled him to study every form of religion and philosophy. But when he tried to distinguish the true from the false he found no sure test. At last he turned to Sufism. He carefully studied the writings of mystics and as he read these it became clear to him that now he was on the right path. He realised that the higher stages of Sufism could not be learned by study but had to be realised by experience, *i.e.*, ecstasy and moral transformation. According to Ghazālī and his followers: "The ego is a simple, indivisible and immutable soul-substance, entirely different from the group of our mental states and unaffected by the passage of time."\*

Students of Western thought are always impressed by the value Nietzsche placed on hardness. But there have been several Oriental thinkers and mystics who have also placed hardness amongst the highest virtues. Iqbal, particularly mentions 'Alī Hujwarī and Abul 'Ulā al-Ma'arri. 'Alī Hujwarī, or to give him his full name, Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Uṭhmān bin 'Alī al-Ghaznavī al-Jullalī al-Hujwarī, was a native of Ghazni in Afghanistan. He travelled far and wide over the Muslim world and finally came

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 95.



to Lahore and died there between 1072 and 1076 (Nicholson). His magnum opus, *Kashf-ul-Mahjūb*, was written in the latter years of his life—partly, at any rate, at Lahore. Its object is to put forth a complete system of Sufism. He reconciled his theology with the advanced type of mysticism. He strenuously resists the doctrine that human personality can be merged and extinguished in the being of God. Iqbal tells us how, when a resident of Merv came to 'Alī Hujwarī and complained about his enemies, 'Alī Hujwarī gave him a long discourse on the virtue of hardness. Similarly Abul 'Ula al-Ma'arrī, the great Syrian poet, who was born in 973 A.D. at Ma'arratul-Numan, a Syrian town situated within 20 miles south of Aleppo always extolled hardness. When a friend sent him a roasted partridge Ma'arrī addressed the partridge on the virtue of hardness in the following words :

“ To be weak is the greatest crime in the world. If you were a hawk, nobody could have dared to offer you for eating like this.”

As regards points of affinity between scholastic theologians and Iqbal, it must be remembered that Iqbal, being essentially a pragmatist, has very little in common with the scholastics ; but he finds much to admire in their contributions to the solution of various problems by original thinking. There are two recognised schools of scholastic theologians among the Muslims—the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites. While Iqbal has much to criticise in both these schools of scholasticism he agrees in some matters with one school and in other matters with

the other school. Agreement between Iqbal and the Ash'arites on the nature of Time and Space will be referred to later on. But it may be mentioned here that Iqbal agrees with the Ash'arites and with the modern relativist that Time and Space are not two distinct and absolutely independent categories, but rather there is one "point-instant" or "space-time continuum" as the scientists term it. But Iqbal differs from the Ash'arites in his view of the mutual relation between the point and the instant. Paradoxical as it may seem, several writers proclaim Iqbal as the founder of modern scholasticism. This is evidently in view of Iqbal's attempts to reconstruct Muslim religious thought in the light of modern advances in philosophical and scientific knowledge. But we need not pursue the point.

Amongst the non-Islamic sources Iqbal extolled the dynamic philosophy of Sri Krishna and Sri Ramanuj. But beyond this there is very little affinity between any Oriental non-Islamic thinker and Iqbal until we come down to our own times. While Iqbal was preaching his philosophy of ego, there was another great Oriental thinker, Aurobindo Ghose, talking of superman about the same time. Ghose says: "For what is supermanhood but a certain divine and harmonious absolute of all that is essential in man? He is made in God's image, but there is this difference between the divine Reality and its human representative, that everything which in the one is unlimited, spontaneous, absolute, harmonious, self-possessed, becomes in the other

limited, relative, laboured, discordant, deformed, possessed by struggle, kept by subservience to one's possessions, lost by the transience and insecurity which come from wrong holding. But in this constant imperfection there is always a craving and an aspiration towards perfection."\*

Iqbal and Ghose agree that supermanhood is not a special privilege of any class ; it is not a spiritual aristocracy to be enjoyed only by a few people. But there is this fundamental difference between them, that Iqbal, as a practical philosopher, is more concerned with the training of his men and raising them into supermen than Ghose. Neither Iqbal's superman nor Ghose's is a Titan, but according to Ghose the superman is a mere dynamo of spiritual forces ; while in Iqbal, along with spiritual uplift, physical development is not overlooked. As regards the social purpose, while both recognise its importance, Iqbal prescribes the minutest details of the society which he regards ideal. Ghose is content with merely referring to the social purpose. Ghose says : " The right relation of the individual with the collectivity is neither to pursue egoistically his own material or mental progress or spiritual salvation without regard to his fellows, nor for the sake of the community, to suppress or maim his proper development, but to sum up in himself all its best and completest possibilities and pour them out by thought, action, and all other means on his surroundings, so that the whole race may approach nearer to the attainment of its supreme personalities."†

\* Aurobindo Ghose : *Superman*, pp. 8-9. † *Arya*, Vol II, p. 174.

The object is laudable, but we are left in the dark as to the method of attaining it. The communists say that the only way to achieve it is through communism; national socialists try to prove the efficacy of their tenets; imperialists can see the regeneration of man and society only through their conquests. And Aurobindo Ghose is too vague in his description of the society he considers ideal for man to exercise any great beneficial influence.

There is one point to which reference must be made before closing this chapter. It is Iqbal's conception of Space and Time. Iqbal has discussed this age-old philosophical and scientific problem with great thoroughness. Before pointing out where Iqbal agrees with other Eastern thinkers, it may be well to state briefly Iqbal's views. Broadly speaking Iqbal is in general agreement with the Theory of Relativity about the nature of Time and Space. According to him, Space and Time are both relative and real, but Time is the more fundamental of the two. Though space-time is the matrix of all things, still the relation between Space and Time is akin to the relation between the body and the mind. Time is the mind of space. But Iqbal thinks that "the purely physical point of view is only partially helpful in our understanding of the nature of Time. The right course is a careful psychological analysis of our conscious experience which alone reveals the true nature of Time." For this Iqbal divides the inner life of the ego into "efficient ego" and "appreciative ego." The time of the efficient ego is just a diversion of space-time continuum. It is of the

serial character. The time of the "appreciative ego" is non-serial in character.

As pointed out above, Iqbal agrees with the Ash'arites that Time and Space are not ~~two~~ two distinct and absolutely independent categories, but rather are one "space-time" continuum. But he differs from the Ash'arites in his view of the mutual relation between the point and the instant. According to Iqbal the instant is the more fundamental of the two. Iqbal criticises the doctrine of atomic time put forward by the Ash'arites according to which time is a succession of individual nows. The Muslim thinker Ibn-i-Ḥazm refuted the Ash'arite notion of atomic time and atomic space. For Ibn-i-Ḥazm Space and Time are continuous, a view shared by some modern mathematicians. According to Iqbal even Ibn-i-Ḥazm's doctrine does not solve the difficulties arising from the infinite divisibility of Space and Time.

Mulla Jalālud-Dīn Dawānī and the Ṣūfī poet Irāqī take a relativistic view of Time and regard Time as having a different stratum for different beings, possessing various grades between pure materiality and pure spirituality. Irāqī has also tried to reach the concept of Space as an infinite continuum. Fakhrud-Dīn Rāzī gives his most serious attention to the problem of Time in his *Eastern Discussions*. Mir Damād and Mullā Baqir say that Time is born with the act of creation by which the Ultimate Ego realises and measures, so to speak, the infinite wealth of His creative possibilities. But it was Ibn-i-Khaldūn who was the first to submit Time to a

psychological analysis and Iqbal says: "But in view of the nature of his conception of Time he may fairly be regarded as forerunner of Bergson."\*

It is not possible to describe here in detail the Muslim thought on the nature of time, and the brief summary given is meant mainly to show that the Muslim thinkers have always been interested in the nature of Time and Space, and the main source of Iqbal's conception of Time and Space can be traced to the Qur'ān and the thought of Muslim thinkers and mystics. That Iqbal's views agree with those of European thinkers especially Einstein and Bergson, as will be shown in the next chapter, is only incidental. It has been said that Muslim theologians like Imām Shāfa'ī did not mean by remarks like "Time is a sword," what Iqbal thinks they meant. Whether Iqbal's interpretation of these remarks and statements is correct or not, it is obvious that Muslim thinkers and even theologians were always interested in the nature of Time, and the conclusions they reached, differed fundamentally from the popular views. When Iqbal was appointed Rhodes lecturer in Oxford, he told a friend of mine that one of the subjects selected by him for the lectures was the Muslim conception of Time. This lecture would have shown the source of Iqbal's ideas in a way which nothing else can show now. Iqbal always averred that his ideas of Time and Space were derived from the Qur'ān and the Muslim thinkers. According to Iqbal, Muslim thinkers have always been in-

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 134. Flint says of Ibn-i-Khaldūn: "Plato, Aristotle, Augustine were not his peers, and all others were unworthy of being even mentioned along with him."

terested in the nature of time because of the Prophet's identification of God with '*Dahr*' or Time and because the Qur'ān regards alternation of the day and night as one of the greatest signs of God. The Qur'ān says :

Behold ! In the creation  
Of the heavens and the earth ;  
In the alternation  
Of the night and the Day  
.....  
Here indeed are Signs  
For a people that are wise.

II : 164.

Not only this but the Qur'ān alludes to the serial and non-serial aspects of duration in several verses. According to the Qur'ān, if we look at the moment embodied in creation from the outside, that is to say, if we apprehend it intellectually, it is a process lasting through thousands of years ; for one Divine day in the terminology of the Qur'ān, as of the Old Testament, is equal to 1,000 years. From another point of view the process of creation, lasting through thousands of years is a single indivisible act.

Verily, all things  
Have We created  
In proportion and measure.\*  
And Our Command  
Is but a single Act  
Like the twinkling of an eye.

LIV : 49-50.

\* "In proportion and measure" has been translated by Iqbal as "with a fixed destiny."

## CHAPTER IV

### IQBAL AND WESTERN THOUGHT

یورپ میں بہت روشنی، علم و ہنر ہے  
حق یہ ہے کہ بے چشمہ، دیواں ہے یہ ظلمات

Europe is radiant with the splendours of Arts and Sciences,  
Forsooth this Valley of Darkness is without the Font of  
Life !

IQBAL was a keen student of Western philosophy and was all his life studying the works of Western thinkers. That these studies influenced him to a certain extent was inevitable, but as he was essentially what Bertrand Russel calls a " practical philosopher " the real advantage he derived from his Western studies was that, watching the conflict of ideas and creeds in the West, he learnt to appreciate the value of creeds and movements of thought to practical life. Anyway his Western studies exercised certain influences on his thought and philosophy, and it will be interesting to trace the points of affinity between Iqbal's philosophy and the philosophies of some prominent Western thinkers. In a brief survey like this we shall have to confine ourselves to the main points of Iqbal's philosophy and compare them only with the ideas of a few dominant figures in the history of Western thought.

The influence of Greek thought on modern European thought cannot be overemphasised. " We Europeans are children of Hellas " \* says

\* H. A. L. Fisher : *A History of Europe*, p. 1.



Fisher, and the beginning of Western thought must be traced to the galaxy of brilliant Greek thinkers. Greek thought exercised a profound influence on Islamic thought also, but Iqbal rejected all this influence as baneful, and he is always emphasising that Islamic culture is essentially and fundamentally different from Greek culture. He always disapproved of the Hellenistic graft on Islamic thought, and as regards Plato and the neo-Platonists, and the baneful influence they exercised on human progress, he is vehement in his condemnation. Of all the Greek thinkers only Aristotle seems to have influenced Iqbal, although the influence is very slight. Iqbal, in a brief note to the verses in which he criticises Plato's theory of ideas, refers to Aristotle's criticism of Plato with approval. He also mentions Farābī's vain attempt in *Jam'a-al-Ra'ain* to prove that there is no difference between the views of Plato and Aristotle. There is also some resemblance between Iqbal's Superman and Aristotle's Ideal Man. Aristotle defines his Ideal Man as below :

" He is of a disposition to do men service, though he is ashamed to have a service done to him. To confer a kindness is a mark of superiority ; to receive one is a mark of subordination.... He never feels malice, and always forgets and passes over injuries. His courage is sedate, his voice deep, his speech measured ; he is not given to hurry, for he is concerned about only a few things ; he is not prone to vehemence for he thinks nothing very important.... He bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of his circumstances, like a skilful general who marshals his limited forces with all the strategy of war...."\*

\* *Ethics*, IV, 3.

Although Aristotle's Ideal Man differs from Iqbal's Perfect Man in important respects, some phrases irresistibly remind us of Iqbal's lines. For instance, "he is of a disposition to do men service, though he is ashamed to have a service done to him" brings to our minds Iqbal's well-known line :

المحذر از منت غیر المحذر

Beware of incurring obligations, beware !

Then "his courage is sedate, his voice deep, his speech measured" reminds us of :

نرم دم گفتگو گرم دم جستجو

Gentle in speech, fierce in action.

Leaving the Greek thought we come to modern European thinkers. Modern European thought begins with Bacon who learnt the inductive method from the Arabs. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and a galaxy of brilliant thinkers who followed, contributed to the enrichment of this thought. Locke established the independence of matter. Berkeley contended that matter was only a form of mind. Hume did not think that mind mattered at all. Then came Kant. Kant's greatness lies in his teaching that all knowledge is not derived from the senses. Kant demonstrated the utter futility of intellectual effort when faced with the ultimate problems of life, and thus proved the philosophic necessity of faith. Proceeding on the basis of mere metaphysical argument, he found at the end of his *Critique of Pure Reason* that the existence of

God, the freedom of the Will and similar problems are not capable of proof or disproof. The world itself became for him "a hypothesis within hypothesis, a dream within a dream." But in his *Critique of Practical Reason* he found the meaning of life in these very problems or "ideas," and recognised them as the First Principles of Experience. For instance, he found that without postulating the Freedom of the Will it is impossible to live a life of responsibility.

Iqbal also started with faith but he did not have to reason this out. The ceaseless activity of the ego can only be explained in terms of faith in the ultimate result of that activity. As regards scientific experiment, Iqbal starts with intuition and mystic experience as the only way to inner knowledge. Whereas Kant postulates the moral law as a sort of external command, for Iqbal the moral law arises out of the inner necessity of the ego's life. Thus while both Kant and Iqbal believe in faith and moral law, they recognise the necessity of these fundamental factors in different ways and for different reasons. For Iqbal, personality provides the measure of all things : that which fortifies personality is good, and that which tends to weaken it is bad.

Another difference may be noted between the standpoints of Iqbal and Kant. For Iqbal, freedom and immortality are rewards for ceaseless effort and come to those egos only who never relax themselves. Kant brings in Freedom and Immortality in order to be able to think that ours is a just Universe, and that there is no fundamental discord between actions

and their ultimate results. Kant is thrown back on religious orthodoxy, Iqbal is not.

After Kant we find some resemblance between Iqbal and Fichte. It was Fichte who evolved the conception of the striving ego. Before Fichte the ego was merely a philosophical concept. Fichte made it into a dynamic creative force. Iqbal being essentially a pragmatist impregnated it with practical contents, and laid the whole structure of his philosophy for the moral uplift of individual and society on this concept.

The next great thinker between whose thought and Iqbal's philosophy there appears to be some resemblance is Nietzsche. In fact several writers have gone so far as to assert that Iqbal derived his whole philosophy from Nietzsche. For instance Professor E. G. Browne says : " Muhammad Iqbal has set forth his own doctrines (which as I understand them, are in the main an Oriental adaptation of Nietzsche's philosophy) in a short *mathnawī* poem entitled *Asrār-i-Khudī*, lithographed at the University Press, Lahore, and translated into English with an Introduction and Notes by my friend and colleague Dr. R. A. Nicholson."\* In dealing with Nietzsche one is faced with the problem of finding an authority whose interpretation of Nietzsche will be universally accepted. Some writers have unduly criticized Nietzsche and others have absurdly overrated him, and it is impossible to illustrate Nietzsche's meaning by brief quotations from his writings. Fine literary artist

\* E. G. Browne : *History of Persian Literature in Modern Times*, p. 431.

as he is, no author is more obscure and difficult to understand than Nietzsche, so much so that even students who have been studying him all their lives find it difficult to agree as to the meaning of some of his writings. It can be easily imagined that giving quotations from such an author is not the best way to understand him. Hence we are forced to fall back on a recognised impartial writer on Nietzsche in order to explain his philosophy. Of the numerous writers in English, Professor A. H. J. Knight is regarded as an unbiased and impartial writer whose study of Nietzsche is recognised as essentially objective and fundamentally correct, and we cannot do better than quote from this author freely.

Before tracing any resemblance between Iqbal's and Nietzsche's thought, we have to state briefly Nietzsche's philosophy: "Dionysus, Recurrence, Superman; these ideas, and those dependent upon them, make up the most important part of Nietzsche's constructive philosophy, or, if one prefers it, of his religion," thus writes Professor A. H. J. Knight.\* When tracing points of affinity between Nietzsche's philosophy and Iqbal's philosophy it will be better to deal with these three heads of Nietzsche's philosophy in the reverse order. So we shall start with the Superman. Most people, among whom there are many who have never studied Nietzsche and do not understand him, know that he talked about the Superman. A few years later Iqbal wrote on the same subject, so it was easy for those

\* A. H. J. Knight: *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche and particularly of his connection with Greek Literature and Thought*, (published by the University Press, Cambridge), p. 119.

who had studied neither or only one of these great thinkers to imagine a connection between the philosophies of the two. We have to ascertain what kind of Superman Nietzsche wants to produce. The main characteristics of Nietzsche's Superman are admirably summed up by Knight in the following words: "Freedom from ethical restrictions, for great ends; active, creative greatness; joy; these shall be good. Fetters shall be thrown off and authority denied. This life shall be accepted as the only life, and as good, though terrible. All that impedes greatness, power, beauty, shall be abolished. The fears of sin, hell, death, conscience shall be exorcised. As there is no soul without body, there can be no spiritual greatness where the body is sick: therefore, health is immeasurably valuable. Pity is a sickness or a selfishness. It hinders action, or serves to give an unhealthy pleasure to the pitier. Hardness is a virtue beyond all price."\*

In *Also Sprach Zarathustra* we have the following sentiments expressed by Nietzsche: "Destroy for me, oh destroy for me," says Zarathustra "the Good and Just," And "God is dead: Now let us will that the Superman live! Man is a thing that must be excelled." Again "God is dead, God died of his pity for man. Therefore be warned against pity."

Thus it will be seen that Nietzsche's Superman is a ruthless, violent, unscrupulous personification of "Will to Power," a remorseless sadist without any

\* A. H. J. Knight: *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche*, p. 127.

finer feelings, whose one aim is to destroy all that he can. On the other hand, Iqbal's Superman is an indomitable self-conscious centre of energy whose main characteristic is tolerance for others. Instead of disbelieving in God, his one aim in life is the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth; and for this he has to be strong enough to defy all obstacles that come in his way. Nietzsche's denial of the existence of soul without body makes his Superman a materialist whose entire development is physical, while Iqbal's Ideal Man is a veritable dynamo of the forces of the spirit which brings matter under control. Nietzsche's Superman takes delight in destroying all he can, while Iqbal's Ideal Man destroys only what he cannot reform. Let Iqbal speak for himself :

ہاتھ ہے اللہ کا بندہ مومن کا ہاتھ  
 غالب و کار آفریں کار کشا کار ساز  
 خاکی و نوری نہاد بندہ مولا صفات  
 ہر دو جہاں سے غنی اس کا دل بے نیاز  
 اُسکی امیدیں قلیل اس کے مقاصد جلیل  
 اس کی ادا دلفریب اُس کی نگہ و نشواز  
 نرم دم گفتگو گرم دم جستجو  
 رزم ہو یا بزم ہو پاک دل و پاکباز

A Momin's arm is really God's arm—  
 Dominant, creative, resourceful, efficient.

Human but like angels in disposition.      A slave with the  
master's attributes,
His carefree heart not worried about either world.  
His hopes are small, his aims great,  
His manners captivating, his eyes charming.  
Gentle in speech, fierce in action ;      [disposition.  
In war or in friendly assemblies pure of heart and noble of

Thus it will be seen that so far as the conception of Superman is concerned the only thing common between Nietzsche and Iqbal is the term Superman, and as a matter of fact even this is not common, because Iqbal never uses the term Superman when he mentions his Ideal Man. He prefers the term Perfect man or *Momin*.

Now we come to the second head of Nietzsche's philosophy of life : the idea of Eternal Recurrence. It is in *Also Sprach Zarathustra* that Nietzsche adopts Recurrence as part of his own system :

“Sing and bubble over, oh Zarathustra, heal thy soul with new songs : that thou mayst bear thy great fate ; which was never yet any man’s fate !

“ For thy beasts know well, oh Zarathustra, who thou art and must become : see thou art the teacher of Eternal Recurrence—that is now thy fate !

\* \* \* \* \*

“ I come again, with this sun, with this earth, with this eagle, with this snake—not to a new life or better life or similar life ; I come eternally again to this life and same life, in the greatest things and also in the smallest things, that I may teach again the Eternal Recurrence of all things—that I may speak again the word of the great midday of the earth and of men, that I may again proclaim to men the Superman.”

It is unnecessary for us to consider the merits of the idea of Eternal Recurrence, as we are here mainly



concerned with what Iqbal thinks of the idea. But before doing this we have to be clear about the idea itself. When properly analysed, the idea really means that man's progress is not in ascending line but in a circle. Whatever progress we may have attained while producing the Superman, the same process must be gone through again ; man will again have to start from the same point from which he originally started and he will have to pass through the same stages of development. Thus the idea makes the future of mankind sombre and the whole outlook mainly fatalistic. Whatever we may do, whatever we may achieve counts for little. The circle of human development, culminating in the production of the Superman, must be repeated mechanically. The whole prospect is gloomy and pessimistic. Thus the idea is most demoralising and depressing. If we have to go back to the point from where we started there is no ground for excitement.

Now let us see what Iqbal thinks of the idea of Eternal Recurrence. According to Iqbal : " It is only a more rigid kind of mechanism, based not on an ascertained fact but only on a working hypothesis of science. Nor does Nietzsche seriously grapple with the question of Time. He takes it objectively and regards it merely as an infinite series of events returning to itself over and over again. Now Time, regarded as a perpetual circular movement, makes immortality absolutely intolerable. Nietzsche himself feels this, and describes his doctrine, not as one of immortality, but rather as a view of life which would

make immortality endurable. And what makes immortality bearable, according to Nietzsche? It is the expectation that a recurrence of the combination of energy-centres which constitutes my personal existence is a necessary factor in the birth of that ideal combination of energy-centres which he calls 'Superman.' But the Superman has been an infinite number of times before. His birth is inevitable; how can the prospect give me any aspiration? We can aspire only to what is absolutely new, and the absolutely new is unthinkable on Nietzsche's view, which is nothing more than a Fatalism worse than the one summed up in the word "*Qismat*." Such a doctrine, far from keying up the human organism for the fight of life, tends to destroy its action-tendencies and relaxes the tension of the ego."\*

It is unnecessary to deal with the idea of Eternal Recurrence any further and we can pass on to the third head of Nietzsche's philosophy, the Dionysian principle. Dionysus was the God of wine and fertility. His worship was orgiastic and used to be performed at intervals with disgusting excesses of sexual promiscuity and savagery, such as are described in the *Bacchæ*. According to legend, he was torn to pieces by the women of Thrace but he rose again, and mystery rites were performed mainly founded upon this martyrdom and resurrection. Dionysian worship began in barbarian countries, where it was practised with a savage licence shocking to the Greek mind. So it was, according to Nietzsche, kept

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 109.

out of Greece at first by the power of Apollo. Then as the new cult gained strength and made converts, the two hostile deities had to come to terms. Actually they came to a compromise so that the extreme manifestations of Dionysian origin were never known in Greece. But Dionysian *Weltanschauung* swiftly replaced the Apolline. Nietzsche himself describes this *Weltanschauung* as below :

“ The affirmative answer to life even in its strangest and hardest problems ; the will to life, rejoicing, in the sacrifice of its highest types, as its own inexhaustible nature that I call Dionysiac, that I understood as a bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not in order to rid oneself of pity and fear, not in order to purge oneself of a dangerous emotion through an unrestrained release. Aristotle misunderstood it in this sense, but actually to be far beyond pity and fear, the eternal joy of Becoming—that joy which also includes the joy in Destroying.”\*

The symbol of Dionysus is not the Dream, but Intoxication, Ecstasy, Exaltation. In aphorism 370 “ *Was ist Romantik ?*,” Nietzsche further explains what Dionysiasm is. “ But there are sufferers of two kinds, in the first place those who suffer from the overfullness of life.....He who is most right in the fullness, the Dionysiac god and man cannot only permit himself to see what is frightful and questionable, but can even permit himself frightful actions and every luxury of destructions, disintegration, denial, where he is concerned, that which is evil, senseless and ugly seems, so to speak, permitted,

\* A. H. J. Knight : *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche*, p. 162.

in consequence of an excess of creative, fructifying powers, which would be able to make a luxuriant land of fruit out of any desert. . . . The longing for destruction, change, growth, may be the expression of a power that is overfull and pregnant with the future (my term for it, as is known, is the word Dionysiac).''\*

It should be obvious to every student of Iqbal that by no stretch of imagination can his philosophy be called Dionysiac in the sense that Nietzsche uses the term. Iqbal wants to elevate but does not want to destroy. And it is impossible for a sensitive nature like Iqbal to permit himself anything ignoble or ugly. But if by Dionysian outlook we understand a path of stress and struggle as opposed to that of peace and tranquillity (which can be termed Apolline for want of a better term) then these terms will correspond to the Eastern terms *جَلَالِي* (*Jalālī*) and *جَمَالِي* (*Jamālī*). In that case we can say that Iqbal represented a fusion of Dionysian and Apolline philosophies, as his poetry represents a fusion of romanticism and classicism. Hence whatever Iqbal is, he is not Dionysian in the sense understood by Nietzsche. To illustrate our meaning we have only to refer to the fact that whereas the Dionysian type of poetry is lyric and the Apolline type is epic, Iqbal wrote epic as well as lyric.

Now we can consider some of the main ideas dependent upon the three-headed philosophy of Nietzsche described above. These ideas are immoralism, inversion of values, will to power, Herren-

\* A. H. J. Knight : *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche*, p. 83.

moral and Sklavenmoral, position of women, and united Europe. As regards immoralism and inversion of values, it is necessary for us to try and find in Iqbal's thought any resemblance to Nietzsche's ideas. To a deeply religious man like Iqbal the very idea of immoralism is repugnant, and as for the values of things all values for Iqbal are eternal; things are good or bad according to whether they fortify or weaken personality, so no inversion is ever possible.

As regards Will to Power, we must first try to understand what it actually is. In *Klassiker Ausgabe* Nietzsche says: "This world is the Will to Power—and nothing more! And you yourselves are this Will to Power and nothing more!" In *Der Wille zur Macht* life becomes reducible to 'Will to Power.' Nietzsche never agreed that the driving force of life was merely "Wille zum Leben." According to him, life is very seldom a struggle for existence. As a rule it is a struggle to increase power. This 'Will to Power' takes an infinite variety of forms and lies beneath every activity of every living thing on earth. Not with any object but just because "*Wille zur Macht*" is good as it is. Because of this "Will to Power," no ethical code has any validity. Morality has been only a weapon in the hands of those who had the will to gain power, various systems suiting various types and ends. Some writers have compared the struggle for power underlying "*Wille zur Macht*" to the tension between the ego and the environment. But a little reflection will show that the tension so necessary for

the fortification of the ego refers to the moral world, while Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' mainly refers to the political world. Iqbal makes this clear in one of his letters to Professor Nicholson. Thus there is nothing in Iqbal corresponding to the soulless and goalless "Will to Power."

As regards Herrenmoral and Sklavenmoral, the former according to Nietzsche, represents the morality of the rulers and the latter is the morality of the masses who only exist in order to serve and to obey the former. This distinction means a division of the ethical code into two, one for the ruling class and the other for slaves who are always bad, contemptible and cowardly. According to Nietzsche, slaves can be nothing but slaves. According to Iqbal, every human being, master or slave, is a finite centre of possibilities which can be expressed and evolved under healthy influences. In a note on *Muslim Democracy* Iqbal says :

"The Democracy of Europe overshadowed by socialistic agitation and anarchical fear—originated mainly in the economic regeneration of European societies. Nietzsche, however, abhors this "rule of the herd," and hopeless of the plebeian, he bases all higher culture on the cultivation and growth of an Aristocracy of Supermen. But is the plebeian so absolutely hopeless? The Democracy of Islam did not grow out of the extension of economic opportunity ; it is a spiritual principle based on the assumption that every human being is a centre of latent power, the possibilities of which can be developed by cultivating a certain type of character. Out of the plebeian material Islam has formed men of the noblest type of life and power. Is not, then, the Democracy of early Islam an experimental refutation of the ideas of Nietzsche ?"\*

\* 'Muslim Democracy' in the *New Era*, 1916, p. 251.

As regards women, there is no getting away from the fact that in spite of Nietzsche's well-known statement that the highest woman is a higher being than the highest man, though rarer, he had a very poor opinion of the fair sex. Iqbal on the other hand sees in women the hope for mankind and wants to pay divine honours to Hadrat Fāṭima. No doubt Iqbal holds that the place of men and women in the world can never be quite the same, still he recognises essential nobility of woman's part in life. While Nietzsche talks of a good European and a united Europe, Iqbal talks of a united humanity.

Thus it will be seen that there is no resemblance of any sort between the basic ideas of Iqbal and Nietzsche. The two present entirely different views of life which are poles apart. One believes in a division of humanity into water-tight compartments resembling Manu's caste-system, the other wants to abolish all such distinctions. As remarked before, those writers who have talked of resemblance between the two have not taken the pains to study either, and most of them can be ignored. But lately there has appeared in *The Urdu*, the well-known quarterly journal of Delhi, a dissertation in which the author says that there is enough internal evidence in Iqbal's works to show that Iqbal borrowed some of his ideas from Nietzsche. He has classified this internal evidence under three heads :

- (1) Both Iqbal and Nietzsche condemn Plato.
- (2) According to both, man has to pass through three stages.
- (3) Both have mentioned the story of the

diamond and coal to exalt hardness.

It is undoubtedly true that both Iqbal and Nietzsche condemn Plato, but for a scholar to say only that and no more tantamounts to misleading by revealing only a half truth. Let us first find out why Nietzsche condemns Plato. In the words of Professor Knight, "The mission of Socrates and Plato, he says, was to secure the control of all the instincts by the reason ; his own creed, at this time, was the unchecked dominance of natural instincts. Life is "Will to Power ;" and it is only men like Socrates who are mean and base ("Socrates was Mob"), who deny that it is rightly so. Socrates is the end, the deliberate destroyer, of all before him that was fine and admirable of the glorious myths of tragedy, music, lyricism. He is the first and completest decadent."\*

Nietzsche maintains that the sayings and teachings of the Platonic dialogues are nearly all those of Socrates, not of Plato. Hence "the criticisms that he levels against Plato are in effect those brought against Socrates—anti-artist, hypocrite moraliser—plus the special charge that Plato wrote extremely badly, and was, in fact, a bore. Only once does Nietzsche praise him, and that in a passage where he suggests that he might have been great, incomparably great, had he never come under Socrates' influence."†

Thus we see that Nietzsche dislikes Plato because he follows Socratic methods, and he hates Socrates because Socrates has introduced rational methods

\* A. H. J. Knight : *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche*, p. 21.

† *Ibid.*, p. 57.



instead of following instincts. Now let us see why Iqbal dislikes Plato. In a letter to Professor Nicholson Iqbal writes :

“ My criticism of Plato is directed against those philosophical systems which hold up death rather than life as their ideal, systems which ignore the greatest obstruction to life, namely, matter, and teach us to run away from it instead of absorbing it.”\* Along with Plato Iqbal condemns all those thinkers and poets, like Ibnul‘Arabī and Ḥāfiz, who advocate renunciation of life. It will be clear from the above that, although Iqbal and Nietzsche both dislike Plato, they dislike him for different reasons. And just to trace the fountain-head of Iqbal’s thought from the mere fact that he also like Nietzsche, dislikes Plato is not correct.

According to Nietzsche, man has to pass through the following three stages :

Camel,  
Tiger,  
Child.

According to Iqbal, man has to pass through the following three stages :

Obedience to the Law,  
Self-Control,  
Vicegerency of God.

As can be seen the only factor common to these thinkers is the number three. But another Muslim thinker ‘Abdul Karīm al-Jilī also considers three stages necessary for man’s development. ‘Abdul

\* Quoted by Prof. R. A. Nicholson in his Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*, p. xvi.

Karīm lived nearly six centuries before Nietzsche and Iqbal had studied 'Abdul'Karīm before he knew anything about Nietzsche. In any case to seek resemblance of thought on this slender ground is not reasonable. We know that most of the Islamic religious ritual, in fact the ritual in all Semitic religions is repeated thrice, and if Iqbal needed any inspiration about the number of stages necessary for man's evolution, there was certainly no need for him to turn to Nietzsche. One fact should be mentioned here. Iqbal, when describing obedience mentions the many good points of the camel. The utility of a camel, his obedience and hardihood, are well-known themes in Muslim literature. These qualities are even referred to in the Qur'ān. Hence this one illustration cannot be considered sufficient in tracing any resemblance between Iqbal and Nietzsche.

As regards the story of the diamond and coal, let us compare the story as told by Nietzsche and Iqbal.

This is Nietzsche's description :

"Why so hard?" said the kitchen coal once to the diamond: "Are we not then near relations?"

"Why so soft? Oh my brothers, thus I ask you: are ye not then my brothers?"

"Why so soft, so yielding and submitting? Why is so much evasion, denial in your heart? So little fate in your gaze?"

"And willed ye not to be fates and relentless: how could ye one day—conquer with me?"

"And if your hardness will not flash, and cut, and cut in pieces: how could ye one day create with me?"

"For all creators are hard. And delight it must seem to you, to press your hand on centuries as on wax—

" Delight, to write on the will of centuries as on bronze—harder than bronze, nobler than bronze. Only the noblest is quite hard.

" This new commandment, Oh my brothers, I put up over you : become hard !"

Iqbal says :

#### STORY OF THE DIAMOND AND THE COAL

Now I will open one more gate of Truth,

I will tell thee another tale.

The coal in the mine said to the diamond,

" O thou entrusted with splendours everlasting,

We are comrades, and our being is one ;

The source of our existence is the same,

Yet while I die here in the anguish of worthlessness,

Thou art set on the crowns of emperors.

My stuff is so vile that I am valued less than earth,

Whereas the mirror's heart is rent by thy beauty.

My darkness illumines the chafing-dish,

Then my substance is incinerated at last.

Every one puts the sole of his foot on my head

And covers my stock of existence with ashes.

My fate must needs be deplored ;

Dost thou know what is the gist of my being ?

Thou art a condensed wavelet of smoke,

Endowed with a single spark.

Both in feature and nature thou art star-like,

Splendours rise from every side of thee.

Now thou becom'st the light of a monarch's eye,

Now thou adornest the haft of a dagger."

" O sagacious friend !" said the diamond,

" Dark earth, when hardened, becomes in dignity as a  
Having been at strife with its environment, [bezel.

It is ripened by the struggle and grows hard like a stone.

' Tis this ripeness that has endowed my form with light

And filled my bosom with radiance.

Because thy body is soft, thou art burnt.

Be void of fear, grief, and anxiety ;

Be hard as a stone, be a diamond !  
Whosoever strives hard and grips tight,  
The two worlds are illumined by him.  
A little earth is the origin of the Balck Stone  
Which puts forth its head in the Ka'ba :  
Its rank is higher than Sinai,  
It is kissed by the swarthy and the fair.  
In solidity consists the glory of Life ;  
Weakness is worthlessness and immaturity."

Now it will be seen that the story was first described by Nietzsche. Iqbal liked it and narrated it in his own inimitable way. Iqbal when praising hardness has even described in verse Abul 'Ula al-Ma'arri's experience already referred to in the previous chapter. He has translated poems of several English and German poets, *e.g.*, Cowper's *The Mountain and the Squirrel*. Does it mean that Iqbal has borrowed his philosophy from Cowper ? When we keep in our minds the background of Iqbal's philosophy—a reaction to philosophies of self-renunciation, we can realise that it was inevitable that he should extol hardness. When mentioning this if he restates a story originally told by Nietzsche, we cannot attach much importance to it so far as his philosophy is concerned.

Thus it will be seen that the whole bogey of internal evidence is nothing more than loose thinking on the part of a few critics.

Having proved that so far as basic thought is concerned there is nothing common between Iqbal's philosophy and Nietzsche's thought, and having exposed the fallacies of those who talk of internal evidence as providing a clue to the source of Iqbal's

thought, it will be interesting to see what Iqbal himself has to say about Nietzsche. It has been frequently remarked that Iqbal disliked Nietzsche immensely. Whether this is a fact can be seen by referring to what Iqbal has said. In a poem written few years before his death, Iqbal said :

اگر ہوتا وہ مجذوب فرنگی اس زمانے میں  
تو اقبال اس کو سمجھاتا مقام کبریا کیا ہے

Had that *Majdhūb* of Europe been alive today,  
Iqbal would have explained to him the place of God.

It will be seen that Iqbal calls Nietzsche, '*Majdhūb*.' Now *Majdhūb* in Muslim mysticism is a person highly developed spiritually, whose mental process goes wrong as a result of the psychological stresses generated during the rigorous regime of spiritual exercises. Iqbal does not think that Nietzsche was insane in the accepted sense of the term. Nietzsche certainly denied the existence of God, but that was, according to Iqbal, Nietzsche's loss. Legend says that St. Paul on his journey to Rome turned aside to visit Virgil's tomb near Naples and that weeping over it he exclaimed :

"What a man would I have made of thee  
Had I found thee alive  
O greatest of the poets."

Iqbal's sentiments for Nietzsche bear a close resemblance to those St. Paul is said to have experienced on visiting Virgil's tomb.

In *Payām-i-Mashriq*, Iqbal says :

گر نواخواهی ز پیش او گریز در نئے فلکش غریب و تنہا است  
 بیشتر اندر دل مغرب نشود دستش از خون چلیپا احمر است  
 آن کہ بر طرح حرم، ستخانہ ساخت قلب او مومن دماغش کافر است

If thou dost desire the melodious tunes away from him,  
 In the scratch of his pen is the noise of the thunder.

He put a dagger in the breast of the West,

His hand is besmeared with the blood of the Church.

He constructed a temple on the lines of Ka'ba

His heart is *Momin* but his mind is steeped in disbelief.\*

Thus it will be seen that instead of condemning Nietzsche, Iqbal judges him sympathetically and justly. He gives him credit for much and points out the main defects of his *Weltanschauung*.

Summing up, it can be stated that so far as their ideas and philosophies are concerned, there is no resemblance between Iqbal and Nietzsche. Iqbal has certainly described in verse some stories and an aphorism or two originally mentioned by Nietzsche. But he has also translated poems of several other poets and has in several cases given entirely new adaptations of old masterpieces. We must bear in mind that here we are concerned mainly with Nietzsche's influence on Iqbal as a thinker and not his influence as an artist. After all Nietzsche was a very great artist in prose and verse and naturally exercised a great influence on other literary artists. Let us once

\*This line has a reference to the Prophet's remarks about the Arab poet Omayya. Nietzsche is a disbeliever because he denied the existence of God. He is *Momin* because his views show remarkable resemblance to Islamic tenets.

more quote Professor Knight in this connection :

“ But as Schiller’s influence faded, from 1900 onwards, Nietzsche’s grew beyond all bounds and all reason and nearly every poet of any pretensions fell under his sway.”\*

After Nietzsche the closest parallel with Iqbal in Western thought is Henri Bergson. Bergson starts with the fact that change is the fundamental reality of the Universe. Life is a continuous stream of change all round, but our intellectual vision gives us the impression that Life is made up of isolated states and things. Our outward perceptions also mislead us, because they are meant to equip us not with a knowledge of Reality but with practical guidance in everyday life. Intellect concerns itself with the appearance of life, which is space and serial time, while the Reality reveals itself in the unity of our consciousness which is known to us intuitively and which exists in “ pure time ” or “ la duree.” Reality thus known is in the nature of a Creative Impulse, the “Elan Vital,” which is a creative change. It is a tremendous push forward and drives man and beast before it. But its path is absolutely unpredictable. According to Bergson this forward push exists for its own sake, and has no implications of future purpose. Iqbal also believes in the reality of the change but does not agree with Bergson’s creative impulse which reminds one of Schopenhauer’s Blind Will. Such a principle leaves no scope for personality. Indeed it seems absurd to think of the human ego under Bergson’s system. Iqbal and Bergson both believe in the reality of

\* A. H. J. Knight : *Some Aspects of the Life and Work of Nietzsche*, p. 6.

“ pure time ” as distinguished from “ serial time.” But as Iqbal says : “ I venture to think that the error of Bergson consists in regarding time as prior to self, to which alone pure duration is predictable.” There are numerous differences between the thought of Iqbal and Bergson. In Bergson the conflict of mind and matter means a dualism in the whole Universe, which is never resolved into a unity. In Iqbal we have the all-embracing Ego which is God. Similarly Bergson’s uncompromising condemnation of Intellect finds no parallel in Iqbal. Iqbal’s ‘*Ishq*’ is a more vital assimilative process than Bergson’s intuition. Iqbal assigns to Intellect a position subordinate to ‘*Ishq*’, but visualises a perfect harmony of the two.

Before we close this chapter we must refer once more to Iqbal’s conception of Time and Space and trace here the connection between Iqbal’s thought and that of European thinkers. Iqbal has serious objections to Newton’s objective view of Time. Iqbal also criticises Nietzsche’s views of Time and Space. Nietzsche expressed these views mainly in connection with his doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. Iqbal has great admiration for Einstein and dedicates a whole poem to him in *Payām-i-Mashriq*.

The following lines are from this poem :

ملوہ می خواست مانند کلیم نابور

تا ضمیر مستنیر او کشود اسرار نور



از فرار آسمان تا چشم آدم یک نفس

زود پروازے کہ پروازش نیاید در شعور

Impatient like Moses he wanted a manifestation of the  
Glorious,

So his bright intellect resolved the mystics of light.

Whose flight from the heights of the sky to the observer's  
eye takes but one instant!

And is so swift that it cannot even be conceived.

Einstein has shown that the conception of an absolute Time and an absolute Space is untenable both on theoretical and experimental grounds. According to the Theory of Relativity, Time and Space are not absolute and separate from each other, but relative and mutually dependent. According to this theory, the universe does not consist of two separate categories, Time and Space, but of a single Space-time continuum. Consequently our three-dimensional world has now become four-dimensional because in addition to length, breadth, and height we require time to determine an event completely. For Einstein, Space-time is real but relative to the observer.

Iqbal is in general agreement with the ideas of the Theory of Relativity but he raises an objection to the Theory regarding Time as a fourth dimension of Space. According to Iqbal this would mean that the future is as indubitably fixed as the past, and Time would cease to be a free creative movement. This is not a correct view of the Theory of Relativity. Actually this theory does not regard Time as a fourth dimension of Space, but of the Space-time continuum.

But Iqbal proceeds to analyse further aspects of Time which the theory does not consider. Here Iqbal agrees with Bergson about the duration in Time. One point worth noting here is that Iqbal arrived at his conclusions regarding Time long before the Theory of Relativity was known beyond a small section of mathematicians.

Some European thinkers like McTaggart have been misled in assuming the unreality of Time by not differentiating serial time from non-serial. They assume that serial time is final. In this connection Iqbal says :

“ If we regard past, present, and future as essential to Time, then we picture Time as a straight line part of which we have travelled and left behind, and part lies yet untravelled before us. This is taking Time not as a living creative movement but as a static absolute, holding the ordered multiplicity of fully shaped cosmic events revealed serially like the pictures of a film to the outside observer.”\*

According to Iqbal the future exists only as an open possibility and not as a fixed reality. Here the modern quantum theory supports Iqbal.

In one of his letters to Professor Nicholson of Cambridge, Iqbal drew attention to the views of the British philosopher, Alexander and mentioned the points of similarity between Professor Alexander's views and his own. A thorough and critical examination of the connection will be a valuable contribution to the study of Iqbal.

While we have indicated above the points of agreement between Iqbal's philosophy and the thought of prominent European philosophers, enough

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam*, pp. 54-55.

has been said to demonstrate clearly that this resemblance is only in minor points and Iqbal's philosophy of ego is distinctly and essentially quite original. But, as in the case of Plato, stray thoughts bear resemblance to those of other thinkers. It could not be otherwise.

To sum up, amongst Western thinkers Iqbal shows some points of affinity with Fichte, Bergson and Einstein only. The conception of the ego is common to Fichte and Iqbal, and in their ideas about Time Iqbal agrees with Einstein and Bergson. But we must bear in mind that these points occupy only a minor place in Iqbal's philosophy of ego, and the fount of Iqbal's conception of Time can be traced to Muslim thought. The fact that he published his conception of Time, mostly in agreement with Einstein's Theory of Relativity, long before the mathematician, provides an indication of the originality of his conceptions.\*

\*Professor M. M. Sharif of 'Aligarh University has in the course of an article in the *Islamic Culture* of July, 1942 tried to trace the influence of McTaggart and James Ward on Iqbal's conception of God. Readers will find this much interesting.

## CHAPTER V HIS POETIC ART

شعر را مقصود اگر آدم گری است  
شاعری هم وارث پیغمبری است

If the object of poetry is to make man,  
The poet is in direct lineage with the prophets !

TO IQBAL, poetry was "the aureole of true philosophy and a complete science" whose object was to appeal to the finer side of human nature, to strengthen it, and to come to the rescue of mankind in its struggle against all that is ignoble and ugly. According to Iqbal, poetry which fails to awaken in man sympathy for neglected truths and to provide guidance towards the light in dark and gloomy days has completely failed in its great mission. To him the true function of a poet is to befit man for a more courageous grappling with life's problems and to enable him to overcome all obstacles in the way of his onward march. Hence before dealing with his poetry it will be helpful if we understand Iqbal's conception of art. For him the true aim of all art is to make human life rich and beautiful, and art that fails to do this has failed in its great mission.

اے اہل نظر ذوق نظر خوب ہے لیکن  
جو شے کی حقیقت کو نہ دیکھے وہ نظر کیا  
مقصود ہنر سوز حیات ابدی ہے  
یہ ایک نفس یا دو نفس مثل شرر کیا

بے معجزہ دنیا میں ابھرتی نہیں قویں  
جو ضربِ کلیسی نہیں رکھتا وہ ہنر کیا

O wise ones ! It is well to have a thirst for knowledge,  
But what is in art that faileth to grasp the reality of things.  
The object of all art is to attain the warmth of life immortal,  
What availeth a spasm or two that vanish like a spark !  
Without a miracle nations cannot rise—

What is art without the striking power of the Moses' staff !

If art does not contribute to the fullness and exuberance of life and fails to provide guidance for humanity in the various problems that baffle it, that art is meaningless. In his introduction to *Muraqqa-i-Chūgtāi* Iqbal says :

“ The spiritual health of a people largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their poets and artists receive. But inspiration is not a matter of choice. It is a gift, the character of which cannot be critically judged by the recipient before accepting it. It comes to the individual unsolicited and only to socialise itself. For this reason the personality that receives and the life-quality of that which is received are matters of the utmost importance for mankind. The inspiration of a single decadent, if his art can lure his fellows to his song or pictures, may prove more ruinous to a people than whole battalions of an Atilla or Changiz. . . . To permit the visible to shape the invisible, to seek what is scientifically called adjustment with Nature is to recognise her mastery over the spirit of man. Power comes from resisting her stimuli and not from exposing ourselves to their action. Resistance to what is with a view to create what ought to be, is health and life. All else is decay and death. Both God and man live by perpetual creation.”\*

\* *Muraqqa-i-Chūgtāi*, Foreword,

The artist is constantly struggling with his environment to get the upper hand, and the struggle enables the inner powers of his life to unfold themselves and to produce art. This struggle or state of tension helps the development of one's personality or ego, which should be the true aim of all art. Thus we have a test for art as for all other human activities. Art that fortifies the ego is wholesome and good, and art which tends to weaken it is unhealthy and undesirable. Iqbal has no patience with people who talk of "art for art's sake." According to him real art must impinge dynamically on human life, and, while pleasing, it must provide guidance to human thought and energy. The aim of art must be to serve life and to make it more glorious and beautiful. The true function of all artistic effort is not merely to provide amusement or to give delight but to awaken high sympathies in man. Just as God has created Nature, man creates art, and it is for us to decide whether man's artistic creations are not superior in design and grace to the world created by God. Pointing out the fact that the results of his creative activity show marks of superior craftsmanship, man says to God :

تو شب آفریدی چراغ آفریدم  
 سفال آفریدی ایام آفریدم  
 بیابان و کسار و راغ آفریدی  
 خیابان و گلزار و باغ آفریدم

من آفم کہ از سنگ آئینہ سازم  
من آفم کہ از زہر نوشینہ سازم

Thou did'st create night and I made the lamp,  
Thou did'st create clay and I made the cup.  
Thou did'st create the deserts, mountains and forests,  
I produced the orchards, gardens and the groves ;  
It is I who makes glass out of stone,  
And it is I who turns a poison into an antidote ! )

Art represents man's attempts to grasp the realities of life, and great artists cannot be conceived to have girded themselves to their great efforts merely to add to man's entertainment by providing intellectual dolls and toys. Nothing would have spurred them to their great efforts except the thought that their achievement will live to change the destiny of mankind by reinvigorating its decayed energies. But to fulfil this noble mission art must satisfy certain conditions, and Iqbal has laid these down in the following lines :

نغمہ می باید جنون پروردہ آتش در خون دل حل کردہ  
نغمہ گر معنی نہ ارد مرده ایست سوزاوار آتش افسردہ ایست  
آن ہنرمندے کہ برفطرت فرود راز خود را بر نگاہ ماکشود  
آفریند کائنات دیگرے قلب را بخشد حیات دیگرے

A melody must be nourished on madness of love,  
It should be like fire dissolved in life-blood,

A melody that has no meaning is life-less,  
Its warmth is only from a dying fire !  
The skilful master improves upon nature  
And reveals his secret to our gaze !  
He creates a new world—  
And gives a new life to our being !

The domain of all artists is Beauty and this the artists see in all objects except those really ugly and ignoble. Beauty ennobles human life by creating desires which in their turn engender Love. The aim of all art is an expression of Beauty, and this it effects by idealisation. By idealisation artists raise every thought and action to a higher plane. According to Iqbal if an artist is to fulfil his great mission his art should be subjective, and his work must express his own feelings and emotions and not aim merely to reproduce an out-and-out representation of the object. This means that sincerity must be the keynote to all artistic expression. When sincerity attains sufficient intensity, it develops into realisation and it is this realisation which reveals the secrets of life to the artist's eye. This revelation, when given artistic expression, serves to buoy up man's spirit for the stress and struggle of existence, and this will not be possible unless art is essentially vitalising. All art, to be of any help to mankind, must be invigorating and refreshing, as healthy people do not need any opiates which eventually only tend to make life sombre by their depressing effects. To conclude, true art is the expression of Beauty with a view to create desires in the human heart which engender Love—that great solvent for all human difficulties ; or to put it in terms of Iqbal's philoso-



phy, the true function of all art is to strengthen the ego. To quote Iqbal :

"The ultimate end of all human activity is Life-glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose, and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to Reality around, on the mastery of which alone Life depends, is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power."\*

حسن خلاق بہار آرزوست جلوہ اش پروردگار آرزوست  
سینہ شاعر تجلی زار حسن خیزد از سینائے او انوار حسن  
از نگاہش خوب گردد خوب تر فطرت از افسون او محبوب تر

Beauty is the creator of desire's spring-tide,  
Desire is nourished by the display of Beauty.  
'Tis the poet's breast that Beauty unveils,  
'Tis from his Sinai that Beauty's beams arise ;  
By his look the fair is made fairer,  
Through his enchantment Nature is more beloved.

With this insight into Iqbal's conception of art it will be easy to understand his poetry. The keynote of his poetic art is a desire to impress upon mankind those great truths which alone can bring about the amelioration of man. The main object of his poetic art is to come to the help of his

\* "Our Prophet's criticism of contemporary Arabian Poetry" in *The New Era*, 1916, p. 251.

readers in their struggle of life. To achieve this it is essential that he must sing of life, for as Matthew Arnold says, "The greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life—to the question : How to live." In this what tends to give weight to his utterances and charm to his art is his intellectual grasp. As A. W. Ryder has remarked :

"Poetical fluency is not rare ; intellectual grasp is not very uncommon ; but the combination has not been found perhaps more than a dozen times since the world began."\*

In Iqbal we not only find the combination of poetical fluency and intellectual grasp, but find the combination affected with such exquisite harmony and grace, that its examples are not easy to find in the literatures of the world.

Iqbal's poetry has a universal appeal mainly because there is practical wisdom and a calm optimism in all his poems. Like Goethe, his strength lies not only as a teacher or thinker but mainly as a prophet of humanity. One fact which we must bear in mind is that in Iqbal the two powerful impulses to artistic expression are his faith in the human capacity for limitless development and man's unique position in the universe. Both these impulses tend to make the appeal of his poetry universal. In addition to these there is the vast range of his poetry—his subjects embrace a cat on an English girl's arms, historical buildings in Cordova, a visit to Napoleon's tomb, Sicily, Shakespeare, Nietzsche, Ghalib, Goethe, Einstein, Lenin, and so on. Having

\* A. W. Ryder : *Shakuntala and other poems of Kalidasa*, p. xx.

sung of every conceivable subject on this sublunary planet, in *Jāvid Nāmāh* he soars to other planets. This vast range needs a versatility of poetic art, and the versatility of Iqbal's poetic art is immense. To start with, he wrote poetry in three languages and was actually planning to write in a fourth when death took him away. There is no kind of poetry except the dramatic that he did not write in Urdu and Persian—the two languages in which he has left us mature poetry. He wrote lyric, philosophic, epic and satiric poetry. He wrote elegies and odes. He wrote quatrains (*Ruba'iyāt*), a form especially associated with Omar Khayyam. In each kind of poetry his work will stand comparison with that of the world's greatest. His philosophic poetry reminds us of Rūmī, his epic poetry brings to our minds that of Dante and Milton. His lyrics resemble those of Pindar, Shelley, Ronsard, Ḥāfiz. His elegies will stand comparison with those of Tennyson and Mutanabbī. His descriptions of nature remind us of Wordsworth's poems.

It is unnecessary to emphasise the difficulties which beset one trying to study the main tendencies in the art of such a super craftsman. There is always the risk of creating a wrong impression by laying emphasis on certain tendencies only. But it is clear that the chief characteristic of Iqbal's poetic art is a harmonious synthesis of romanticism and classicism. We see in his art the fusion of romantic fervour in classical form. Again and again we find in his poems romantic matter in a classical form—self-restrained and austere. Even when the

form is romantic to a great extent, it is tinged with classicism. For similar fusion of romanticism and classicism we have to go to Goethe, and as remarked by J. W. Robertson, "to understand not the anti-thesis of classicism and romanticism but their synthesis is the way progress lies."\* As life, according to Iqbal, has within itself possibilities of infinite development, there should be no limit to a poet's creative genius. Out of his inner depths he brings forth a world of his own and he describes this in language of rare freshness and beauty. Again and again Iqbal refers to his romanticism :

فروغ آدم خاکی ز تازه کاری هست  
مه و ستاره کنند آنچه پیش ازین کردند

Man's glory consists in his innovation—  
Moon and stars do what they have been doing.

He is so determined to create a new order of things that with great audacity he throws a challenge to God :

گفت یزدان که چنین ست و دگر هیچ یگو  
گفت آدم که چنین ست و چنان می بایست

God decreed, "It is like this and mention not aught."  
Man said, "Verily it is like this but it ought to be like that."

But in romantic poetry there is always a danger that an immature artist may mistake unbridled thinking for enthusiasm. Here classicism acts as a

\* J. W. Robertson : *The Genesis of Romantic Theory*, p. 29.

brake, so that even in moments of greatest creative activity the poet may not lose touch with the hard realities of life. Classicism serves to check creative activity from wandering into an unreal world of fantastic creation.

Another prominent tendency in Iqbal's art is symbolism. Iqbal defines symbolism in the following line :

برہنہ حرف نہ گفتن کمال گویائی است  
حدیث خلوتیان جز بہ رمز و ایما نیست

The acme of eloquence is in not uttering naked truths,  
The discourse of those who know the secrets is in symbols.

Symbolism imparts great effect to poetry and is commonly employed by Persian and Urdu poets. In European poetry it was adopted comparatively recently when French symbolists disapproving strongly of romanticism and classicism concentrated on symbolism. By this their poetry, although charming in many respects, suffered considerably in effect.

In Iqbal's poetry we have a fusion of romanticism and classicism along with symbolism, and the blending of all these tendencies is so thorough that no harshness or incongruity is noticeable. It is due to the graceful synthesis of these tendencies that Iqbal can turn his art to the dual function of pleasing and teaching in one and the same breath. His poetic art is so perfect that didacticism is hardly noticeable, but in any critical analysis of his art didacticism cannot be ignored. To appreciate all these tendencies we can do no better than quote from

Iqbal's poem *Taskhīr-i-Fiṭrat*. In this poem Iqbal has told us the story of the fall of man, giving an account of the birth of Adam and Satan's disobedience. Satan's character is highly romantic and he believes in a life of excitement and action. His chief characteristics are the love of life and a passion for action. His fall is due to the fact that his rebellious intellect makes him unfit to exercise any self-control, with the result that his whole outlook is perverted. The keynote to his character is his refusal to agree. He has neither love nor faith. His tragedy lies in the fact that he cannot change his destiny. When he is ordered by God to do obeisance to man he replies :

نوری نادان نیم، سجدہ بہ آدم برم  
 او بہ نہاد است خاک، من بہ نژاد آذر م  
 می تپد از سوز من، خون رگ کائنات  
 من بہ دو صرصرم، من بہ نخواستندرم  
 پیکر انجم ز تو، گردش انجم ز من  
 جان بہ جهان اندرم، زندگی مضمر  
 من ز تنک بایگان، گدیہ نکردم سجود  
 قاهر بے دوزخم، داور بے محشر م  
 تو بہ بدن جان دہی، شور بجان من دہم  
 تو بہ سکون رہزنی، من بہ تپش رہبر م

آدم خاکی نہاد، دون نظر و کم سواد  
 زراد در آغوش تو، پیر شود و در برم

I, a creature of light, am not foolish to bow before Adam,  
 He is clay by nature, I fire by origin !  
 By my fire the blood courses through the veins of Creation,  
 I possess the speed of the tempest and the noise of the  
 thunder !

Thou hast created the starry spheres, I cause them to move—  
 I am the life of all in the world, the life latent in everything.  
 I never begged for prostrations from men of no substance,  
 I am the terrible without a hell, and the judge without the  
 day of judgement.

Thou givest life to the body, I infuse warmth into life,  
 Thou showest the way to peaceful rest, I lead towards  
 restless strife !

The man of earthly origin, foolish, and short-sighted  
 Is born in Thy lap, but grows mature in mine !

Penalised for his disobedience, Satan plans the fall of man by tempting Adam. He points out to Adam that the tranquil life in the garden of Eden is insipid and lacks the warmth and fervour of passion. If Adam cares to enjoy life in the real sense he has to create passion :

زندگی سوز و ساز، بہ ز سکون دوام  
 فاختہ شایمں شود، از تپش زیر دام  
 هیچ نیاید ز تو غیر سجود نیساز  
 خیز چو سرو بلند، اے بعل نرم گام

تو نه شناسی هنوز شوق بهیر دزوصل  
چيست حیات دوام، سوختن ناتمام

A life of ceaseless strife is better than perpetual peace,  
The dove becomes a falcon when struggling under a snare.  
Ye know naught but prostration,  
Arise like the erect cypress, O slow in action !  
Know ye not that union only means the end of desire—  
The secret of eternal life is in incomplete burning !

Adam follows Satan's advice and comes out of Eden. He discovers pleasant thrills amidst the tumults and distraction of life, and these thrills give rise to new desires in his heart. He loses his old blind faith in the value of things, and true to classicism, begins questioning, and doubting. Iqbal changes his style when describing Adam's feelings :

چه خوش است زندگی را همه سوز و ساز کردن  
دل کوه و دشت و صحرا به دمه گداز کردن  
همه سوز ناتمام ، همه درد آرزویم  
بگمان و هم یقین را که شهید جستجویم

How pleasant it is to make life a continuous struggle,  
To melt with a single breath the heart of the mountain, the  
forest and the desert !  
I am all an imperfect burning—all a painful longing—  
I give away certainty for doubt as I am the victim of a  
ceaseless quest !

In the final scene Man appears before God and admits his sin. He submits that, although he went



astray, his being would have lacked something important without experience of the great temptation held out by Satan :

گرچه فسونش مرا برد از راه صواب  
از غلطم در گذر عذر گنا هم پذیر  
تا شود از آه گرم این بت سنگین گذار  
بستن ز نار او بود مرا ناگزیر  
عقل بدام آورد فطرت چالاک را  
ا هر من شعله را دسجده کند خاک را

Although his guile has led me astray from the path of  
rectitude,

Forgive my wrongs and accept my excuse for the sin.

To acquaint this feelingless statue with the warmth of desire,

It was necessary for me to be a disciple of Satan.

See that Intellect ensnares the one with cunning and guile---

Satan born of fire eventually performs obeisance to man of  
clay !

The whole poem is a masterpiece and is a fine example of the synthesis of romanticism and classicism. The style changes with the subject and there is a remarkable correspondence between the metre and rhythm and the theme.

In addition to the synthesis of romanticism and classicism, Iqbal indicates beautifully the mission of man on earth. The account of Adam's advent is in itself vitalising and ennobling. It makes us realise the true position of man in the system of the universe.

Till Adam's creation love had no devotee, beauty had no worshipper, mysteries were mysteries, desire and emotion had no place in the scheme of things, and life was dormant. By means of love man tried to unravel the mysteries of nature and to develop his self by warring against the unself. As the goal of life contemplates the fullest possible development of all latent human faculties this is possible only by man subduing the world of matter. When he does this by fortifying his self, Satan who refused to bow to him in Paradise, is willing to render him homage.

As regards symbolism, Satan symbolises the world of sensuousity, perception and intellect ; man can reach his goal only by subduing the world of perception. Satan is also an embodiment of the ceaseless quest, which alone can enable man to unravel all mysteries and thus attain control over the world of matter.

Another poem showing synthesis of romanticism and classicism is the trilogy known as *Lenin, Angels' Song and God's Command*. In these poems, again by employing a fusion of romanticism and classicism, Iqbal imparts to his art that depth of emotion and that breadth of vision which gives it a universality of appeal. Lenin, who while alive, never believed in God suddenly finds himself face to face with the Almighty. It is no longer possible for him to deny the existence of God, but he is still bewildered and asks God : " Tell me whose Deity Thou art ? For the East the white men are the God and for the West glittering sovereigns are the God,

There is a good deal of misery in the world and what colour one sees on human faces in the evening is either due to paints and powders or drinks. Thou art Just and All-powerful but in Thy world the labourer has still to suffer a good deal. When is Capitalism going to end? The world is waiting impatiently for the Day of Reckoning." This harangue, naïve and simple, draws a song in chorus from the angels. This angelic chorus is to tell the Almighty that everything is not right with His world. The Almighty is so impressed by all this that He orders the Heavenly agents to rock the foundations of the society based on iniquity, and to awaken the long-suffering poor from their pathetic contentment. Lenin addresses God thus :

اے انفس و آفاق میں پیدا ترے آیات  
 حق یہ ہے کہ ہے زندہ و پائندہ تری ذات  
 میں کیسے سمجھتا کہ تو ہے یا کہ نہیں ہے  
 ہر دم متغیر تھے فرد کے نظریات  
 آج آنکھ نے دیکھا تو وہ عالم ہوا ثابت  
 میں جس کو سمجھتا تھا کلیسا کے خرافات  
 اک بات اگر مجھ کو اجازت ہو تو بوجھوں  
 حل کرنے سکے جس کو حکیموں کے مقالات !

وہ کون سا آدم ہے کہ تو جس کا ہے معبود؟  
 وہ آدم خاکی کہ جو ہے زیرِ سماوات؟  
 مشرق کے خداوند سفیدانِ فرنگی  
 مغرب کے خداوند درخشندہ فلزات!  
 یہ علم یہ حکمت یہ تدبیر یہ حکومت!  
 پیستے ہیں لہو دیتے ہیں تعلیم مساوات!  
 چہروں پہ جو سرخی نظر آتی ہے سرشام  
 یا غارِ زہ ہے یا ساغر و مینا کی کرامات  
 تو قادر و عادل ہے مگر تیرے جہاں میں  
 ہیں تلخ بہت بندہٴ مزدور کے اوقات  
 کب ڈوبے گا سرمایہ پرستی کا سفینہ؟  
 دنیسا ہے تری منتظر روزِ مکافات!

O Thou Whose signs one sees in Life and Nature !  
 The fact is that Thou art Eternal and Living,  
 But how could have I known that Thou did'st exist,  
 Every moment the views of the wise were changing.  
 Today after seeing with my own eyes I believe  
 What I considered nothing more than an obsession of  
 With Thy permission I desire to ask a question, [Church.  
 To which the philosopher's theses could provide no answer.  
 Where is the man whose God Thou art ?  
 Is it the man of clay who lives beneath the skies ?  
 For the East, gods are the whites of Europe,  
 For the West, gods are the shining dollars !

This knowledge, this learning, this statesmanship, this  
 They suck the blood and yet preach equality. [statecraft,  
 The ruddy complexion that one notices on faces in the  
 Is either due to powders or is the result of drinks. [evening  
 Thou art All Powerful and Just, but in Thy world  
 The lot of the hapless labourer is very hard !  
 When will this boat of Capitalism be wrecked ?  
 Thy world is waiting for the Day of Reckoning !

This plain statement of facts by Lenin moves  
 angels to sing in chorus :

عقل ہے بے زمام ابھی عشق ہے بے مقام ابھی  
 نقش گر ازل ترا نقش ہے نا تمام ابھی  
 خلق خدا کی گھات میں رند و نقیسہ و میر و پیر  
 تیرے جہاں میں ہے وہی گردش صبح و شام ابھی

Intellect is still unbridled, Love is not localised, [thing,  
 O Painter Divine Thy painting is still lacking in some-  
 Lying in ambush for mankind are the vagabond, the  
 theologian, the leader and the monk,  
 In Thy Universe the old order still continueth !

This chorus moves the Almighty and He orders  
 the angels to burn every ear of corn in the field,  
 which is not used for providing sustenance to the  
 cultivator who tends it :

انگو میری دنیا کے غریبوں کو جگا دو  
 کاخ اُمراء کے درو دیوار ہلا دو  
 گر ماؤ غلاموں کا لہو سوز یقیں سے  
 کنہشک فروماہ کو شاہیں سے لڑا دو

جس کھیت سے دہقاں کو میسر نہیں روزی  
 اس کھیت کے ہر خوشہ گندم کو جلا دو  
 تہذیب نوی کارگہ شیشہ گراں ہے  
 آداب جنوں شاعر مشرق کو سکھا دو

Arise and awake the poor of My world,  
 Shake up the very foundations of the palaces of the rich !  
 Warm the blood of slaves with life-giving faith—  
 Give the humble sparrow strength to fight the falcon !  
 Burn every corn of wheat in that field,  
 Which does not provide sustenance to the cultivator.  
 Modern civilization is but a glass blower's work-house—  
 Teach madness to the Poet of the East (so that he may  
 smash it).

The style of the poem is classical but the subject is romantic. Lenin's address is in the language of a perplexed soul looking for something and eager to learn. The rhythm and metre of the angel's chorus brings to our minds the glory of celestial music. While God's command is in solemn organ-like tones in keeping with the majesty and dignity of the Almighty. But in spite of all this Lenin's character is entirely romantic.

For the charm produced by suggestive art one has to turn to the *Arab Cameleer's Melody*. In nuance, in subtle and exquisite cadences of music and rhythm it will be difficult to find a poem to match this. It is well known that a Bedouin's camel forms his all-in-all, it is his sole companion in the vast

expanse of tropical deserts and his sole possession in the journey of life, and these considerations generate a passionate attachment between the two. In describing this attachment the poet has used forms of expression which are highly suggestive. As the driver's song helps him in forgetting his troubles and steels his comrade for the long and tiring journey, so the poet's song will serve to infuse new courage in the drooping spirits of his people :

ناتہ سیار من  
 آہوئے تاتار من  
 درہم و دینار من  
 اندک و بسیار من  
 دولت بیدار من  
 تیز ترک گامزن منزل مادور نیست  
 دلکش وزیر باستی  
 شاہد رعناستی  
 روکش و راستی  
 غیرت لیلہ ستی  
 دختر صحراستی  
 تیز ترک گامزن منزل مادور نیست

O my fleet-footed dromedary !

My gazelle of Tartary !

O my *dirham* and my *dinar* !

O my all-in-all !

My rising fortune !

Step forth a little faster, our destination is not far !

Thou art charming and graceful !

Thou art a proud beauty !

Thou art the rival of the *houri* !

Thou art the envy of Laila !

Thou art the daughter of the desert !

Step forth a little faster, our destination is not far !

The camel's journey is symbolic of man's life. All the encomiums used by the cameleer for his steed apply with equal emphasis to man—the vicegerent of God on earth. And by making the cameleer remind the camel repeatedly that the goal is not far, the poet infuses courage in man so that he may not grumble at the pains which accompany his arduous evolution. There is so much of beauty, true imagination, and power of language, especially of epithet, in these verses that reciting them one feels elated ! The poet's vocabulary is so vast that, whatever simile he uses, he never fails to light on the most felicitous expression. The passionate eloquence provides an index to the spontaneity of his genius.

In *The Symphony of the Stars* the poet describes how stars moving in the vastness of the firmament indulge in a symphony which shows that in spite of their satisfaction with life they are still looking for a new world. It is a highly suggestive poem touching upon various subjects—historical, astronomical and



artistic, with rare charm. While stars go revolving and discovering new spheres, man unconscious of his great destiny is absorbed in the petty affairs of this sublunary planet and forgets his noble mission. What can man achieve if he can only make up his mind to shake off this attitude of contentment with things as they are :

ہستی ما نظام ما مستی ما خرام ما  
گردش بے مقام ما زندگی دوام ما  
دور فلک بکام ما ، می نگریم و می رویم  
بیش تو نزد ما کیسے سال تو پیش ما دے  
اے بکنار تو یسے ساختہ بہ شبنمے  
با تلاش عالمے ، می نگریم و می رویم

Our life, itself a universe ;

Our ecstasy, but a rhythm ;

Our aimless meandering,

The life eternal for us ;

Time's wheel subserves our purpose. We watch and

That which you regard as bulky is but an atom, [move on !

Your year but a moment to us.

Reclining in the lap of the ocean,

You are content with a dew drop.

We seek the world entire. We watch and move on !

There is another romantic poem to which reference should be made here—*The Hour and the Poet*. A poet in his wanderings strays into Heaven. He is still so absorbed in the world of his own thoughts that the thousand-and-one charms of

that place fail to attract him. So in despair the *houri* gets hold of him and addresses him thus :

"You are a strange fellow. You do not seem to have any craving for these life-giving drinks, nor any use for my looks. You do not seem to appreciate what friendship and companionship are. All that you seem to be interested in is the creation of an imaginary world of your own." The poet turns back and replies in a way which shows his boredom :

"I do not care for the place as it is too quiet for me. The tranquillity of the place is awful. The moment I see a pretty face I begin longing for a prettier. This does not give me any peace of mind. The residents of this blissful spot have never experienced any want or grief, and so they are incapable of sympathising with any one." The *houri* addresses the poet thus :

نہ بہ بادہ میل داری نہ بمن نظر کشائی  
عجب این کہ تو نہ دانی رہ و رسم آشنائی

Neither you care for wine nor you look at me  
'Tis a wonder you know not the art of love-making.

The poet replies :

چہ کنم کہ فطرت من بہ مقام درنسا زد  
دل نا صبور دارم چو صبا بہ لالہ زارے  
چو نظر قرار گیرد بہ نگار خو بروئی  
تہد آن زمان دل من پئی خو تر نگارے

ز شرر ستاره جویم ز ستاره آفتابے  
 سر منزلی ندارم کہ بمیرم از قرارے  
 دل عاشقان بمیرد بہ بہشت جاودانے  
 نہ نوائی درد مندے نہ غمی نہ غمگسارے

What am I to do ? My temper does not get reconciled  
 to a place,  
 I have a restless heart like the breeze in a poppy field !  
 When my vision is arrested by a beloved's beauty,  
 My heart begins yearning for a more beautiful face !  
 I seek a star from the spark and a sun from the star,  
 I do not think of destination as rest means my death !  
 A lovers' heart loses all zest in eternal Paradise—  
 There is no song of the forlorn, no grief and no  
 sympathiser in this place !

The poem is a piece of art in which the poet has displayed artistic presentation, grace of style, and the power of originality along with symbolism. The *houri* symbolises the peace and tranquillity in the man's life. This tranquillity can be attained by loss of feeling, but then it will lack something important. Feeling and perception must be there to make life worth living.

Having dealt with the basic tendencies of Iqbal's poetic art, we can now examine some of the main characteristics of his compositions.

(1) *His Imagination*.—We may not all agree with Shelley when he says, "Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be the expression of the imagination," but it must be admitted

that imagination is a special endowment of poets. A poet's imagination on the one hand expresses intellectual and spiritual conception in appropriate form, and on the other fills with a higher meaning what he sees. Thus all poets must have Imagination; and the difference between various poets is only a matter of degree. An artist like Iqbal was endowed with supreme imaginative powers—associative as well as interpretative. For associative imagination one has to refer to his poem *Tanhā'ī*. Poets in all languages have written on loneliness, but Iqbal's treatment illustrates his creative as well as associative imagination :

بہ بحر رقتم و گفتم بہ موج بیتابی  
 ہمیشہ در طلب استی چه مشکلی داری؟  
 ہزار لو لوئے لالاست در گریبان  
 درون سینہ چو من گوہر دلے داری؟  
 تپید و از لب ساحل رمید و ہیج نکفت  
 شدم بحضرت یزدان گذشتم از مدوہر  
 کہ در جہان تو یک ذرہ آشنایم نیست  
 جہان تہی ز دل و مشت خاک من ہمہ دل  
 چمن خوش است و لے در غور نوایم نیست  
 تبسم بہ لب اُورسید و ہیج نکفت

To the sea-shore I went and said to a restless wave,  
 "Thou art always in quest of something. What ails thee?  
 There are a thousand bright pearls in thy bosom,  
 But hast thou a heart like mine in thy breast?" [nothing!  
 It merely trembled, sped away from the shore, and said  
 I betook myself to the presence of God, passing beyond  
 the sun and the moon, and said:  
 "In Thy world not a single particle knows me, [all heart  
 The world has no heart and this earthly being of mine is  
 The garden is charming, but is not worthy of my song."  
 A smile came to His lips but He said nothing!

This is a great poem. Every image that the poet's imagination associates with loneliness heightens its effect. And various images serve to heighten the central emotional effect. The harmony of the images is ensured by the fact that they all spring from the same feeling in the poet.

But it is in his interpretative imagination that Iqbal excels. The interpretative imagination perceives spiritual value or significance and renders objects by presenting qualities in which the spiritual value resides. The poet thus interprets to man his unuttered experience. For example in the poem on *Dew* he says:

در پیرهن شاهد گل سوزن خار است  
 خار است، ولیکن زندیمان نگار است  
 از عشق نزار است  
 در پهلوی یار است  
 این هم ز بهار است

In the garment of the sweet flower is the needle of the  
Though 'tis a thorn, 'tis an associate of the beloved. [thorn,  
    'Tis after all a frenzied lover,  
    And is in close association with the beloved,  
    And it also owes its existence to the Spring.

By presenting the qualities of a thorn, which generally do not strike an ordinary observer, the poet inculcates upon man the courage with which he must face the difficulties, disappointments and set-backs in life. After all life will be incomplete without these, so it is no use grumbling about them.

The relation between imagination and emotion is a close one, so much so that a deep emotion kindles imagination and imaginative insight kindles emotion. It follows then that a high degree of imagination generally implies a corresponding development of the emotions. Iqbal's supreme imaginative power ensures that his emotions are deep but sane and well-controlled. It is this quality which saves Iqbal from flabby sentiments, so common among a majority of Urdu poets, whose emotional nature tends to run into fancy.

(2) *His treatment of Nature.*—Iqbal has left a large number of poems describing natural scenes which remind us of Wordsworth's poetry, and an important feature of Iqbal's poetic art is his extensive love of nature. He imagines all natural objects living lives like ours by what Ruskin calls the "pathetic fallacy" and his treatment of nature is in the main subjective. He transfers his own mental and emotional states to the objects he describes :

صدمہ آجائے ہوا سے گل کی بتی کو اگر  
اشک بن کر میری آنکھوں سے ٹپک جائے اثر

If the petal of a flower suffers a shock from the breeze,  
It affects me so that a tear gushes out of my eye !

Nature is always steeped in his personal feeling,  
for example when describing the advent of spring  
he says :

خیز کہ در کوہ و دشت ، خیمہ زد ابر بہار  
مست ترنم ہزار  
طوطی و دراج و سار  
بر طرف جو بہار  
کشت گل و لالہ زار  
چشم تماشا بیار

خیز کہ در کوہ و دشت ، خیمہ زد ابر بہار

Arise ! for on hills and dales  
The Spring has arrived !  
Mad in singing are a thousand  
Cuckoos, partridges, and quails,  
Along the banks of the brook  
Have sprung roses and the poppy,  
Come out and see.  
Arise for on hills and dales  
The Spring has arrived !

The description of the spring is not only enchanting, it also epitomises Iqbal's message : " Awake,

arise, and get busy. It is no time to lie dormant." The effect of the spring is to bestow life and vitality on everything, and as we go through the poem we feel the very being pulsating with life.

Apart from this subjective treatment, Iqbal uses Nature for his metaphors, similes and illustrations which he employs with wonderful effect. He also uses nature as a background to his poetry. Nature is brought to sustain by sympathy the inner significance of the message of the poem. Often Nature is described in a way to prepare the ground for the message the poet wants to convey. For example, in *Sāqī Nāmāh* Iqbal says :

نفاذیلی نیلی ہوا میں سرور    ٹہرتے نہیں آشیاں میں طيور  
وہ جوئے کہتاں اچکتی ہوئی    اٹکتی لچکتی سرکتی ہوئی  
اچھلتی پھلتی سنبھلتی ہوئی    بڑے پیچ کھا کر نکلتی ہوئی  
ذرا دیکھ اے ساتی لالہ نام    سناتی ہے یہ زندگی کا پیام

The azure sky overhead, the air charged with joy !  
Even the birds will not stay in their nests !  
And behold yonder the mountain stream leaping,  
Conquering obstructions, swaying, and crawling ;  
See it jumping over or slipping by obstacles and then  
   eddying on,  
Rushing forth in spite of many a curve and twist !  
Just behold, O *Sāqī*, bright-faced !  
How the stream conveys the message of life !

The whole description of nature is used as a background for conveying the poet's philosophy of life through the mountain stream. Just as the



stream advances steadily in spite of all obstructions, so man must develop his personality by surmounting all obstacles.

In his description of Kashmir Iqbal says :

رخت بہ کاشمیر کشا کوہ و تل و دمن نگر  
 سبزہ جہان جہان بین لالہ چمن چمن نگر  
 باد بہار موج موج مرغ بہار فوج فوج  
 صصل و سار زوج زوج بر سر نارون نگر  
 لالہ ز خاک برد مید موج با بجو تپید  
 خاک شر شر رہ بین آب شکن شکن نگر  
 دختر کے برہنے ، لالہ رختے ، سمن برے  
 چشم بروی او کشا باز بخوشتن نگر

Alight in Kashmir and behold the mountains, the hills  
 and the dales,  
 Behold the green grass all over and gardens full of poppies.  
 Feel spring breeze in wave after wave, see birds in myriads,  
 The wood pigeons and the starlings in pairs on the poplars.  
 The poppies have sprouted from the dust, ripples play on  
 the stream surface,  
 Behold the dust full of sparks and water wrinkled by  
 ripples !  
 See the young Brahmin girl, pink-cheeked and silver-  
 bosomed,  
 Feast thine eyes on her beautiful face and then look at  
 thyself !

Note how beautifully the poet has utilised the spiritual significance of Nature in taking his readers'

thoughts from the beautiful scene in Kashmir to his own self. The poet seems to ask : " Cannot man, the vicegerent of God on earth, attain all the majesty, vastness and freedom of nature by developing himself ? " The contemplation of Nature is made by the poet a revealing agency, showing us the vast possibilities of man's development. This method of treating nature corresponds to some extent to that adopted by Tennyson in his *Idylls of the King*.

Apart from the subjective treatment of nature Iqbal also excels in describing natural scenes. This descriptive poetry is common in his earlier compositions. In these Iqbal paints pictures in which he seems to take delight in colouring his palette with richest colours. By idealisation he makes us see beauty which we would have passed by without noticing. Describing a pastoral scene, he writes :

صف باندھے دونوں جانب بوئے ہرے ہرے ہوں  
ندی کا صاف پانی تصویر لے رہا ہو  
ہو دلفریب ایسا کہسار کا نظارہ  
پانی بھی موج بن کر اُٹھ اُٹھ کے دیکھتا ہو  
پانی کو چھو رہی ہو جھک جھک کے گل کی ٹہنی  
جیسے حسین کوئی آئینہ دیکھتا ہو  
پھولوں کو آئے جس دم شبنم وضو کرانے  
رونا میرا وضو ہو ، نالہ میری دعا ہو

Arrayed along both sides are trees,  
The clear water of the river is reflecting the scene ;  
So charming is the scene of hilly country  
That water is rising in ripples to view it !  
The flowery boughs stoop towards the water,  
Like a beautiful damsel looking into a mirror.  
When dew falls for flowers to perform ablutions with,  
My ablutions will be performed with tears and prayers  
with the wailing !

Such descriptive poetry is mainly objective, but in Iqbal even these descriptions are tinged with subjectivism.

The main characteristic of these descriptive poems is that Iqbal makes us feel that we are in the very midst of the scene that he is depicting, and we begin to feel as if the natural phenomena are taking place within the very ambit of our observations. The effect produced by the poems is quite in keeping with the spirit of description. In his poem *An Evening* Iqbal has depicted the calm of eventide. He does this by saying that all nature is quiet and calm as if absorbed in a deep reverie, the moonlight, the branches of trees, the birds, and the stars are all still and quiet. The poet emphasises the prevailing calm by saying that the magic of tranquillity has even turned the tempestuous motion of the river into restful gliding. When reading the poem we feel as if the spirit of tranquillity is enveloping us and we are being lulled into sleep.

It is not possible here to deal with Iqbal's treatment of nature exhaustively, but reference must be made to the detailed accuracy which characterises his treatment of nature. For example, when

describing the approach of Autumn he says :

پتیاں پھولوں کی گرتی ہیں خزاں میں اس طرح  
دست طفل خفته سے رنگیں کھلونے جس طرح

The petals of the flower fall in autumn in the same manner  
As the coloured toys drop from the hand of a sleeping child.

(3) *Love of Onomatopœia.*—Iqbal's sensitive ear  
loves the use of Onomatopœia.

In his poem *An Evening* he describes the scene of  
perfect calm on the banks of the Neckar in Heidelberg  
in these lines :

خاموش ہے چاندنی قمر کی شاخیں ہیں خاموش ہر شجر کی  
فطرت بے ہوش ہو گئی ہے آغوش میں شب کے سو گئی ہے

The light from the moon is silent,  
Quiet are the branches of every tree,  
Nature is lying peacefully unconscious,  
As if sleeping in the lap of the night.

The frequent use of ش (*shīn*) has made the  
poem so effective that every word seems to call out  
"Hush ! Hush." These lines can only be properly  
appreciated by those who have watched the calm  
and placid flow of the Neckar from the ruined  
castle in Heidelberg. The scene inspires serenity  
and calmness of spirit so beautifully reflected in the  
above lines.

Describing a scene among the awe-inspiring  
hills of Kandhar in Afghanistan, he writes :

رنگ بوبو ہوا بوبو آب بوبو تابدہ چون سیما بوبو

لالہ ہا در خلوت کسار ہا نار ہا بخ بستہ اندر نار ہا

Frequent use of ح (hay) impresses the grandeur of the scene with lofty hills and rugged crags rising in a jumbled mass all round one.

When Iqbal wants to enhance the melodious effect of a poem not only does he use suitable metres but also employs suitable words. For example when in an ecstatic mood he describes his emotions, he uses م (mīm) and ن (nūn) together :

بحر نے می تو ان گفتن تنائے جہانے را  
من از ذوق حضوری طول دادم داستانی را  
من اے دریائے بے پایاں بہ موج تو در افتادم  
نہ گوہر آرزو دارم نہ می جویم کرانی را

A world of desire can be expressed in a word, [presence.  
I took so long to express it to remain in the sweetheart's  
O limitless ocean ! I have flung myself at thy waves—  
I desire no pearls and I seek no shore !

For a similar use of M and N one is irresistibly reminded of the following lines from Shelley :

“ Listen, listen, Mary mine,  
To the whisper of the Apennine.”

Many a time he employs a combination of vowels and consonants to produce a melodious effect. For example :

مے شود پردہ چشم پر کا ہے گا ہے  
دیدہ ام ہر دو جہان را بنگا ہے گا ہے

وادی عشق بے دور و دراز است و لے  
طے شود جادۂ صد سالہ بآہے گاہے

Sometimes a mere blade of grass obscures the vision,  
Sometimes with one glance I fathom the mysteries of both  
The valley of Love is long and tiresome [the worlds.  
But sometimes a hundred years' journey is accomplished  
in a moment !

(4) *Sense of "newness" in his Poetry.*—The remarkable point about Iqbal's poetry is the sense of "newness," and the main reason for this is that although Iqbal was not actually anti-traditionalist, he uses certain words and combination of words to express his visions which are entirely original. Some of these words are coined by him ; others represent old words used in an entirely new sense.

He is also a superb phrase-maker and has wonderful felicity of phrasing by which language acquires meanings, beyond those formally assigned by the lexicographer. These words and phrases act as keystone for the entire arch of the poetic inspiration. As the removal of the keystone is sure to cause the downfall of the entire arch, so if we try to substitute something else for the master word or phrase, the whole artistic expression is marred. Proper expression of the poetic experience depends solely on words and phrases which constitute the very soul of the conception. For example, in the line given below the word, '*qalandarāna*' forms the pivot round which the charm of the conception hinges.

ز برون درگذشتم، ز درون خانه گفتم  
سخنی نگفته را، چه قلند را نه گفتم

I passed by the door outside, but I related all that happened  
inside,  
How *qalandar*-like did I say what had never been said  
before !

To Iqbal '*qalandar*' symbolises a man who defies conventions and formalities. He further idealises this Bohemian into a seer who can know the secrets of a house without going in. His utterances are bound to be weighty and important, and this is the idea of the verse. But the word '*qalandarāna*' infuses a new charm and makes the verse a living reality.

Such words and phrases excite our imagination and go straight home to the heart. This can be achieved only by those artists who are also scholars, or by scholars who are also great artists. Among such words used by Iqbal may be mentioned :

فقیر - فرعاد - پرویز - حیدر - فاران - ایاز - محمود -

خضر - لات و منات - بولسبی

so on and so forth.

Among the new phrases and expressions one may mention :

طائر لاهوتی - ضمیر کائنات - حقیقت منتظر - حدیث ماتم دہری

کارگہ شیشہ گراں - صنم خانہ پندار

and many others,

These words and phrases are too numerous to be mentioned here. By using them Iqbal imparts a sense of "newness" to his poetry. The Persian language was better provided with words and phrases for the expression of his thoughts, and this is said to be one of the reasons why he started writing in Persian. But even Persian is richer today so far as new phrases and expressions are concerned because of Iqbal having chosen it as the vehicle of his thoughts. The use of those words and phrases gives to Iqbal's poetry not only a sense of "newness" found in very few Urdu and Persian poets, but also the quality of surprise which characterises all great poetry.

(5) *Stanza-forms*.—The use of stanza-forms in Urdu and Persian poetry is generally confined to standardised forms, but Iqbal in his quest for more variety in the harmonies of versification adopted several new stanza-forms. In the forms adopted by him a poem is built up of sections strictly identical in form. These forms produce remarkable effects of melody. For example in his poem in *Zabūr* with the refrain "Arise from deep slumber" the stanzas consist of six lines each. The first four rhyme together and have the same metre. The fifth line has a longer metre and the sixth has a shorter one. Both the fifth and the sixth lines rhyme with first four lines and are repeated in each stanza. In the poem *The Symphony of the Stars* every stanza consists of five lines—the first four rhyme and are in the same metre, but the fifth line is in a different metre and does not rhyme with the



other lines. It is repeated at the end of each stanza. In the poem *Revolution* a stanza consists of four lines. In the first stanza all the four lines rhyme, but in the remaining stanzas only the last three lines rhyme. The metre of the first two lines is same, and the third and fourth lines are repeated at the end of each stanza. This subject cannot be dealt with exhaustively here, and this brief reference is made mainly to draw attention to an important characteristic of Iqbal's poetic art. The æsthetic qualities of different stanza-forms adopted by Iqbal and their applicability to different purposes needs detailed investigation. For instance in the poem *The Symphony of the Stars* the rhythm is flowing, showing the calm but quick movements of the stars, but in the poem on *Revolution*, the rhythm is delayed and cadences lingering and soft, depicting the gradual arrival of revolution.

(6) *Eloquence of Language*.—For a student, the most remarkable characteristic of Iqbal's poetry is his passionate eloquence. Time after time he strikes a lofty note without effort, and the onrush of melodious language is amazing. Whatever subject he touches, there is such a flow of ideas draped in beautiful language that one finds it difficult to know whether it is the thought itself or the happiness of its expression which is the source of gratification. And apart from the great value of the thought, Iqbal's poetry displays propriety of language and vividness of imagery, because the poet has succeeded remarkably in giving his philosophy a poetical rendering. The intensity of his vision seems to

give his verse a singular eloquence, and in every line he has written there is an abundance of rich music of the most exquisite tone. Even in his *mathnawīs* the eloquence is maintained wonderfully, and the language never seems to lose flow and harmony. It is reported by some of his friends that, when Iqbal used to be in a mood for composition, the flow of verses seemed incessant. Once he started dictating verses in the evening and he did not finish till the dawn. The largest number of lines that he is reported to have composed in one night is six hundred. During his early years he never took the trouble of writing down what he composed, he could always remember the lines in the order in which he had composed them originally. Later on he used to note down just the first letter of each line and from these he could dictate the lines. He used to say that he could write poetry without any conscious effort, and many a time he used to get up from sleep reciting lines which he had composed when asleep. He often compared poetical composition to the delivery of a child—one could not arrest the process even if one wanted to do so. This only shows the spontaneity of his poetic genius. No wonder that in whatever he has written the eloquence is marvellous! When reading him one feels that the glow of inspiration never shows any signs of diminution.

## CHAPTER VI

### AS A LYRICAL POET

LYRICAL poetry is poetry in its highest, intensest and purest form, as in it the poet sings of emotions which constitute the very life—of love, fear, joy, anger, hope and devotion. Owing to the elementary human emotions with which it deals, the appeal of lyric poetry is universal. There is no human breast which does not beat with joy over success in life, or get depressed over failures, and we all like to have our experiences portrayed by artists and sung by poets in beautiful and musical language. Owing to magical cadence, lyric poetry possesses a haunting loveliness which seems to remove us from the sordid surroundings of this earthly existence and to lift us to a higher plane. Other kinds of poetry may be more difficult to produce, and may represent a combination of more niceties of poetic art, but no other poetry contains so much of the true ‘poetic ore.’ The chief characteristics of lyric poetry are :

- (i) Subjective character,
- (ii) Unity of theme,
- (iii) Spontaneity,
- (iv) Emotional intensity, and
- (v) Brevity.

The earliest lyric required the accompaniment of the harp, and lyric poetry has retained in varying degrees the qualities of a song. It is true that many lyrics cannot be set to music, but they all have a verbal melody. European languages soon developed

several types of poetry which, although differing from the true lyric in several important respects partook in a greater or lesser degree of the chief characteristic of the true lyric—melody and spontaneity. These were termed sonnets, odes, elegies, etc. They are now all included in the lyric poetry. And it became a generally accepted principle in all European literatures that all poetry having verbal music, spontaneity, and unity of theme can be regarded as lyric poetry. Judged by this standard, the *ghazals* of Urdu and Persian literatures represent lyrical poetry. But many *ghazals* do not possess the unity of theme, because the poet does not confine himself to one emotion. Iqbal refers to this lack of unity in the following remarks :

“ The butterfly imagination of the Persian flies, half inebriated as it were, from flower to flower and seems to be incapable of reviewing the garden as a whole. For this reason his deepest thoughts and emotions find expression in disconnected verses (*ghazal*) which reveal all the subtlety of his artistic soul.”\*

Shibli Nu'mānī, the great Indian writer and critic of Persian poetry, considers it a great achievement on the part of the poet to be able to deal with an emotion in a single verse. While much can be said for this point of view, there is no getting away from the irrefutable fact that lack of unity robs the *ghazal* of much effect, and the *ghazal* as such does not fully echo the emotions and sentiments which sway the human breast. The echo may be there but it is in

\* *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, p. viii.

a disjointed condition and is, even in the best of *ghazals*, incomplete.

Apart from the classification of poetry according to contents, Urdu and Persian poetry have a classification based on form. To start with, there are two-rhymed and one-rhymed verses. Of the one-rhymed forms, *ghazal* and *qaṣīda* are the most important. The *ghazal* differs from the *qaṣīda* mainly with regard to subject and length. Both these forms are described by English writers by various terms. Some writers have termed both these forms as odes, others have made a distinction and have called *ghazals* lyrics and *qaṣīdas* odes. Both these forms of poetry generally possess lyrical freshness and verbal music, but a *qaṣīda* not always. There is a third form of poetry known as *qit'as*, which actually means a fragment, and is so called as originally it represented a detached fragment of *qaṣīda*. But in many cases *qit'as* are intended to be independent poems. While most *ghazals*, whether possessing unity of theme or not can be put to music and are essentially lyric, several *qaṣīdas* and *qit'as* can also be lyrical in essential respects. Thus lyrical poetry in Urdu and Persian may comprise *ghazals*, *qaṣīdas* and *qit'as*. But the truly lyrical poetry in Urdu and Persian consists of a special type of *ghazal* and described as the '*ghazal-i-musalsal*'. This is really a *ghazal* which possesses unity of theme. Sa'dī was the first great poet in Persian to try his hand on the *ghazal-i-musalsal*, and many poets after him composed these. *Khusrau*, one of the greatest Persian poets born in

India, excelled in writing *ghazal-i-musalsal*. Although Iqbal has written lyrical poetry in all the three forms mentioned above *ghazals*, *qaṣīdas* and *qit'as*, he excels in the *ghazal-i-musalsal*. Whatever form he adopts, and it will have to be admitted that the classification by form is purely artificial, Iqbal has left lyrical poetry which can stand comparison with the finest lyrical poetry of the world. Professor R. A. Nicholson writes about Iqbal : " His poetry often reminds us of Shelley." Professor E. W. Edmunds, a well-known critical writer says about Shelley : " But in lyric poetry he is amongst the greatest of the world, because of the purity at once of his melody and its inspiration."\* This gives us a measure of the supreme charm of Iqbal's lyric poetry. And it will be interesting for us to investigate the causes which led to Iqbal's greatness as a lyric poet, which in fact go to make him one of the greatest lyric poets of the world.

The causes of Iqbal's greatness as a lyric writer are not far to seek. The foremost cause is the subjective nature of Iqbal's poetic art. Iqbal's subjective poetry provides an eminently suitable vehicle for his songs which treat of his own blissful moments. His songs abound with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo, and with emotions which find a reflection in every mind. And it is in this fact that the secret of the great charm and appeal of Iqbal's lyric poetry lies. His lyric poetry is the consummate expression of either some supreme moment in his own life, or of some raptur-

\* *Shelley and His Poetry*, p. 144.

ous mood, and it brings back to his readers moments and moods in their own lives. All great lyric poetry must be essentially subjective, and it must incorporate the vivid expression of personal experience. For this Iqbal was eminently fitted by the very nature of his poetry. Browning describes a subjective poet in the following lines : " While the subjective poet, whose study has been himself, appealing through himself to the absolute Divine mind, prefers to dwell upon those external scenic appearances which strike out most abundantly and uninterruptedly his inner light and power, selects that silence of the earth and sea in which he can best hear the beating of his individual heart, and leaves the noisy, complex, yet imperfect exhibitions of nature in the manifold experience of man around him, which serves only to distract and suppress the working of his brain."\* Iqbal who believed that all art must be subjective was best fitted to describe his own experiences, the joy of his imagination in its own vision.

The second reason for the universal appeal of Iqbal's lyric poetry is the fact that he sings essentially of life. This gives to his poems the unity of theme so necessary for rhythm and harmony. A subjective poet singing of life weaves into his poetry those thrills of desire, those gushes of emotion which arrest the imagination of readers as they reflect their own experiences. He turns our simple experiences of life into passionate experiences, and communicates

\* Browning's Preface to Shelley's letters. Quoted by Ernest Rhys in *Browning and His Poetry*, p. 62.

these in such vivid and moving imagery that it cannot fail to strike a sympathetic response. In his songs even the highly abstruse notions of philosophy and religion are set free from their academic isolation and became a part of the common life of men. This could be accomplished only by supreme craftsmen like Hāfiz, Ghālib or Iqbal.

The third reason for Iqbal's greatness as a lyric poet is his philosophy of life. By formulating a life of ceaseless striving and discountenancing all those views of life which advocated renunciation and self-annihilation, Iqbal has widened the scope of lyric poetry. If man is not to don the ascetic's sackcloth, but is to live an active life along with his fellow-men, there will be many more occasions for the play of his emotions—joy over success, grief over disappointments, exultation in effort. Real life, according to Iqbal is nothing but a progressive succession of fresh ends, purposes and values. This in itself ensures an unending succession of those thrills of souls, those rapturous glows of feeling which provide the very substance which makes the finest lyrical poetry. Iqbal's philosophy of life also lays down a glorious destiny for mankind. Iqbal gets a glimpse of this destiny, and expresses his joy in this vision in language of rich and varied harmonies. It has always been remarked that the joy of imagination in its own vision is one of the most exquisite moods man ever experiences. In addition to this, Iqbal has also intense faith in his poetry enabling mankind to reach the great goal of his glorious vision. This gives his feelings an intensity which finds expression



in his passionate verse. This is the real secret of the gushing spontaneity of all his lyrics. He sings because he cannot help singing; his heart is full and cannot otherwise relieve itself.

Thus it will be seen that owing to the emotional basis of his temperament, his outlook on life, and his views on poetic art a poet like Iqbal had all the qualifications of a great lyricist. But really great lyrical poetry needs something more than emotions and views on life. It has been said that a lyric poem is the adequate and consummate expression of some supreme moment or rapture in the poet's life. In an essentially lyric poem the inspiring mood must be single, and the language which is chosen to express this great mood or supreme moment must be so chosen as to have perfect rhythm and melody. The outward melody of the language used by the poet must reflect the already rhythmical and musical outflow of feelings that is billowing within the poet. Thus two things are essential for a perfect lyric—original emotion of great intensity and depth and corresponding mastery over language to give it a fitting utterance. Iqbal always had a keen ear for melody and harmony, and he instinctively selected those words and metres which served to enhance the rhythm of his language. To illustrate this we have to refer only to two of his poems :—

فصل بہار این چنین، بانگ ہزار این چنین  
چہرہ کشا، غزل سرا، بادہ یار این چنین

باد بہار را بگو، بے خیال من برو  
 وادی و دشت را دہد، نقش و نگار این چمن  
 دل بکے نباختہ، بادو جہان نساختہ  
 من بحضور تو رسم، روز شمار این چمن

Spring like thus ! Such notes of the nightingale !  
 Unveil thy face, sing a song, and hand round the wine thus !  
 Bid the Spring breeze to follow my fancy  
 Which bedecks with blooms valley and plain thus !  
 My heart devoted to none, not satisfied with both the worlds  
 On the Day of Reckoning I shall reach Thy presence thus !

حلقہ بستند سر تربت من نوہ گران  
 دبران، زہرہ و شان، گلبدنان، سیم بران  
 غرد افزود مرا درس حکیمان فرنگ  
 سینہ افروخت مرا صحبت صاحب نظران  
 اے کہ در مدرسہ جوئی ادب و دانش و ذوق  
 نخر د بادہ کس از کار گہ شیشہ گران

Arrayed round my grave were in mourning  
 Sweethearts, Venus-like, rose-bodied and silver bosomed !  
 The teaching of the Western sages added to my knowledge,  
 Association with the Eastern seers has imparted a fervent  
 glow to my heart.

O ye who seek for culture, wit and enthusiasm in a  
 seminary,  
 Know ye not the futility of seeking wine in a glass blowers  
 workshop !

The subtle sweetness of music, the depth and variety of melody and the vivid spontaneity all go to make the above poems embodiments of lyrical charm and grace.

It has been urged by people who have not read Iqbal's poems that as he sang of his philosophy, of action, and struggle in his poems, they were bound to lack the real poetical fervour. Iqbal no doubt possessed a large background of thought to draw upon and had a powerful intellect which sought to pierce the very core of men and things, and so it was inevitable that he should sing in his poems of subjects with which his intellect grappled. But keen and powerful as Iqbal's intellect was, none knew so well as Iqbal that in song writing intellect must be wholly subordinated to feeling. Thus Iqbal managed to introduce and propagate his philosophy of action and self-development through rhymes and metres inherited from Hāfiz, Nazīrī, and Meer. It is the equipoise of thought and emotion, the strong sense latent and pervading the melody that places Iqbal's *ghazals* among the finest the world has known. They not only reveal a perfect union of soul and form, but show that, while Iqbal retained the old instrument in his hands, the old soft melodies faded and the same chords began to resound with quite different notes, inspiring struggle and stress. As an illustration I quote the following *ghazal*:

ہر چیز ہے موخود نمائی ہر ذرہ شہید کبریائی  
 بے ذوق سود زندگی موت تعمیر خودی میں ہے خدائی

رائی زور خودی سے پر بت    پر بت ضعف خودی سے رائی  
ہیں عقدہ کشایہ خار صحرا    کم کر گلہ برہنہ پائی

Everything is bent on self-revelation,  
Every particle is dying for expansion to Divinity !  
Without the urge for self-expansion life is but a living death;  
The cultivation of Self makes men Divine.  
Development of Self turns a mustard seed into a mountain,  
Its neglect makes the mountain but a seed of mustard !  
The road to success lies through these very thorns of the  
A truce to this complaint of barefootedness !    [desert,

How beautifully Iqbal has sung of his philosophy of ego in these graceful and melodious lines ! It needed a superb artist to achieve this, but it must be remarked that Iqbal's task was rendered easier by poets like Hāfiz, Bedil and Ghālib. So far as I know, Hāfiz was the first great poet to discuss philosophy as known to him, and sociology, and politics in his lyrics. This trend continued in Persian till we find in 'Urfī and Bedil abstruse philosophical subjects discussed with the grace and charm of which only a Persian *ghazal* is capable. The same effect was achieved by Ghālib in Urdu.

In all lyrical poets there is noticeable a deadening of lyrical pulse as the poet's age advances. This is so remarkable that it has led some critics to classify lyrical poetry into two distinct classes : passionate and intellectual. As with age man's passion suffers the lyrical fervour fades ; and poets begin writing more and more of intellectual verses in which the reflective element replaces the fervently passionate. This is true in a more or less degree of all great

lyrical poets. In Iqbal we do not notice any deadening of the lyrical fervour, and the main reason for this was his mysticism. Very early in his poetic career, mysticism enveloped Iqbal's outlook, and as with age the influence of mysticism deepened, and there is no gradation of his lyrical verses into passionate and intellectual. It has, no doubt, been remarked by some that, in some of the Urdu poems written by Iqbal towards the end, the reflective element predominates and the graceful spontaneity of earlier poems is absent. All those who have studied Iqbal will refute this suggestion most unreservedly. Spontaneity, grace, charm, and melody are present even in his later poems, and the emotional intensity is always of a high pitch throughout his poems. But in some of the poems especially in *Bāl-i-Jibra'īl* there is undoubtedly an oddity of expression which on first reading often strikes one as lack of spontaneity. The reason is not far to seek. As Iqbal's outlook developed, he had new mystic experiences, and old words and expressions were inadequate to describe them, and so he had to coin new terms and expressions. From the very beginning, Iqbal started coining new expressions and phrases, but in the beginning the need for these was not so great and perhaps Iqbal did not dare defy conventions so brazenly although he always maintained that it was necessary to do so in a language like Urdu. Towards the end, the need for these new expressions became irresistible, and Iqbal threw overboard all respect for literary usage. The above remarks will be clear from the following

*ghazal* from *Bāl-i- Jibra'īl* :

مٹا دیا میرے ساقی نے عالم من و تو  
 پہلا کے مجھ کو مے ' لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ  
 نہ مے نہ شعر نہ ساقی نہ شورچنگ و رباب  
 سکوت کوہ و لب جوئے و لالہ خودرو  
 گدائے میکدہ کی شان بے نیازی دیکھ  
 پہنچ کے چشمہ حیواں پہ توڑتا ہے سب  
 جمیل تر ہیں گل و لالہ فیض سے اس کے  
 نگاہ شاعر رنگیں نوا میں ہے جادو

My *Sāqī* has effaced all distinction of I and thou,  
 By giving me a drink of "There is no God but He."  
 No wine, no poetry, no *Sāqī*, and no sound of the harp and  
 the lute;  
 There is only the silence of the mountains, the brink of a  
 stream and the wild poppies !  
 Behold the stately unconcern of the beggar of the Tavern—  
 He dashes to the ground his cup on reaching the Font of  
 Life.  
 By its grace the rose and the poppy acquire a fresh beauty,  
 There is magic, forsooth, in the glance of a poet with  
 colourful melodies.

Persian poetry is replete with mysticism, and as every student of Persian lyrical poetry knows, mysticism contributes largely to its great charm. The reason for this is that whereas with others the

fire of passion gets weaker with age and the intensity of emotions and fervour tend to disappear, in the case of mystics age brings new experiences, new raptures and new ecstasies. With age the poet advances mystically, and these new experiences in themselves generate an impassioned eloquence and spontaneity.

We have briefly surveyed the chief reasons for Iqbal's greatness as a lyrical poet. We can now consider the chief characteristics of his lyrical poetry. The first and foremost is his mysticism to which we have already referred. All students of Persian poetry know that mysticism is its very soul. Before Abū Sa'īd Abū'l-Khair began singing of his mystic experiences in poetry, it lacked the charm which today makes it so fascinating for readers all over the world. The very mention of mysticism brings to our minds names like Sanāi, Faridud-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, Maulānā Rūmī and Jāmī. The first question is "What is mysticism?" Mysticism is a mood in which the poet enters the realm Divine, sees the light celestial and hears heavenly music. All these fill him with ecstasies and raptures. A mystic poet retains his experiences and relates these to others when he returns to himself. Iqbal always believed intuition to be a source of human knowledge, and so to him the realm of mysticism was real. He says : "Nor is there any reason to suppose that thought and intuition are essentially opposed. They spring up from the same root and complement each other. The one grasps Reality piecemeal, the other grasps it in its wholeness. The one fixes the gaze on the eternal, the other on the temporal aspect of Reality.

The one is present enjoyment of the whole of Reality ; the other aims at traversing the whole by slowly specifying and closing up the various regions of the whole for exclusive observation. Both are in need of each other for mutual rejuvenation. Both seek visions of the same Reality which reveals itself to them in accordance with their function in life. In fact, intuition, as Bergson rightly says, is only a higher kind of intellect.”\* These observations provide an insight into Iqbal’s ideas on mysticism. To him it was only another form of intellect. The progress of modern physics and the discoveries of Einstein have made us realise that Reality is not only unknown but is unknowable by purely intellectual methods, and the mystic sense in man remains the only short cut to Reality.

Mystic thought in Islam developed two schools, the fundamental difference between the two being the doctrine of unityism. As described elsewhere, this doctrine inculcated pantheism and preached annihilation. The school of Şūfīs believing in unityism sought self-effacement by merging in God. They considered the Infinite Being as an ocean of existence from which the waves of the phenomena arise, only to sink back into it, and their being and not-being are identical, and thus their teachings led to other-worldliness and self-annihilation. All efforts and even moral striving lose independence

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 2-3. In another place Iqbal says : “ The revealed and mystic literature of mankind bears ample testimony to the fact that religious experience has been too enduring and dominant in the history of mankind to be rejected as mere illusion. There seems to be no reason, then, to accept the normal level of human experience as fact and reject its other levels as mystical and emotional.”



because all the good that a creature does, has its source really in the Will of God. According to the other school—the theists, the universe and the creation have a real existence apart from God. The creation is not an illusion or a vain show ; it is an earnest Reality. In early Sufism we find a movement away from the world to God—first actuated by fear and then dominated by love and gnosis. But whatever the motive force, the doctrine of unityism accepted in its entirety cut at the root of all morality and justified the remark of William Jones that “Monism is a moral holiday.” This is not the place either to trace the history and nature of mysticism in Persian poetry or to describe the mysticism of Iqbal. This reference to Iqbal’s mysticism was necessary mainly to point out the influence it had on Iqbal’s lyrical poetry, in contrast with the influence that it exercised on the vast majority of Persian and Urdu mystic poets. Iqbal’s healthy mysticism enabled him to portray healthy sentiments which will interest healthy minds in all ages and in all countries. A majority of mystic poems in Urdu and Persian not only preach, as we said, a moral holiday, but are characterised by blank emptiness and desolation and are in fact little more than a wail of despair. Life is an illusion, so being and not-being are equally good, and the best a man can do is to put an end to life, and so on. In his lyrical poetry Iqbal provides a refreshing antidote to all such pernicious teachings and unhealthy sentiments.

The other characteristic of Iqbal’s lyrical poetry

is his conception of Beauty and Love. Beauty is said to be the special domain of poets and they see beauty in everything. Everything in this world was beautiful in Iqbal's eyes, and in his poetry he resolves everything into the good and the beautiful. He resolves even evil—a seeming incohesion—into the perfect rhythm of life. When we talk of Beauty with reference to Persian poets we must bear in mind that the Persians are highly æsthetic people with a very keen eye for Beauty in every form. Their poets have not only always appreciated Beauty in its many forms but have also described it in exquisite language. They have hundreds of kinds of Beauty :

حسن لیوی - حسن گندی - حسن متابی - حسن صندی - حسن فرنگ -  
حسن نیم رنگ - حسن شسته

To add anything original to a Persian poet's conception of Beauty seems almost impossible. But Iqbal's conception of Beauty is distinctly original. Whilst he saw Beauty in everything, the Beauty which appealed to him most was the Beauty of power and perfection. Everything powerful and perfect fascinated him. Beauty is a mental experience, not a quality of things, and different types of Beauty appeal to different people. As a writer has remarked : "The wind of beauty blows where it lists. Water may seem more beautiful than apes and even than philosophical poetry."\* In everything that is powerful and perfect Iqbal sees an approach to the

\* E. F. Carritt : *What is Beauty*, p. 32.

All-Powerful, the Ultimate Ego, Who is Most Beautiful. This new conception of Beauty by Iqbal has imparted to his lyric poetry that robust vitality and manliness which is singularly lacking in the poems of Persian and other Urdu poets. While Sā'dī, Ḥāfiz, Khusrau, Sā'ib and Meer have all the grace and charm, they lack that vitalising glow, the invigorating touch which is the chief feature of Iqbal's poetry.

“ The author known as Longinus, perhaps in the first century A.D., said that greatness in Nature and art pleases us because it echoes a greatness in our own souls. Plotinus, the Neoplatonist, says that a man who desires beauty is like one who not recognising his own face in a mirror should fall in love with it.”\* The sight of any object with power and perfection throws Iqbal into ecstasy. He sees beauty in the eagle and the hawk which is more inspiring than the beauty of the *bulbul* and the *qumrī*. The sight of mighty mountains fills him with joy, and he is always talking of the Alwand and the Himalayas.

شب من سحر نمودی کہ بہ طلعت آفتابی  
تو بطلعت آفتابی سرزدا این کہ بے حجابی  
تو عیار کم عیاران تو قرار بے قراران  
تو دواے دل نگاران مگر این کہ دیریابی

\* E. F. Carritt : *What is Beauty*, p. 109.

به جلال تو که در دل دگر آرزو ندارم  
بجز این دعا که بخشی بکسوتران عقابی

Thou hast brought to an end my night by thy Phœbus-  
like radiance !

Thou hast the radiance of Phœbus which calleth for  
unveiling !

Thou art wealth to the indigent ; thou bringst solace to the  
inconsolate !

Thou art a remedy to the heart-sick but not readily  
available !

By Thy Glory I harbour no other desire in my heart  
Except the prayer that Thou may grant the might of an  
eagle to the pigeons !

Coleridge says : " In looking at objects of Nature I seem rather to be seeking a symbolical language for something within me than observing anything new." So Iqbal sees in all powerful and perfect things a reflection of his powerful soul.

It is not easy to explain why certain objects appear beautiful to us and not to others and why certain objects appear beautiful at certain times and not at others. It is a question of temperament and mood. And Iqbal by temperament admired everything powerful and perfect. It is unnecessary for us to consider why it is so. What is more important for our purposes is to see its effect upon the lyrical poetry of Iqbal. This was to import virility into Persian and Urdu poetry, virility of a type not found in any Oriental poetry except perhaps in some Arabic writers.

While Iqbal has sung of all human emotions in his poems, the theme of Love is paramount.

Persian and Urdu poetry possess a vast literature on Love, and this powerful emotion has been dealt with from every point of view. But to find any correspondence with Iqbal's ideas on Love we have to go to Rūmī. Reference has already been made to the wide sense in which Iqbal uses the term Love. To him, Love is a force that not only provides a solution for all human difficulties but also a solvent for all human wickedness. It provides a cement for the jarring elements of the Universe. The whole world is just a sepulchre and it is only the magic wand of Love that adds zest to life. As we have seen, Iqbal's philosophy of life insists on ceaseless activity and insatiable yearning, and this is part and parcel of his Love also. But although Love adds to our restlessness, it is this restlessness which makes life worth living :

این حرف نشاط آور می گویم و می رقصم  
از عشق دل آساید با این همه بے تابی

I utter this mirth-giving phrase and dance with glee, [ness.  
From Love the heart receives solace in spite of all restless-

When dealing with the powers of Love, Iqbal also recognises the influence of Intellect. Again and again when describing Love Iqbal refers to Intellect to bring home the difference between these two world forces :

من بنده آزادم، عشق است امام من  
عشق است امام من، عقل است غلام من

اے عالم رنگ و بو این صحبت ماتا چند  
مرگ است دوام تو، عشق است دوام من

I am a free man, Love is my leader,  
Love is my leader and Intellect is my slave.  
O world of colour and smell! how long is this association—  
Thou art to perish, and I am to survive through Love !

The subtle sweetness of music, the vivid spontaneity of imagination and the depth and variety of colour make the above poem most remarkable. According to Iqbal, Intellect is desirable, but Love is more so. The former is necessary because it preserves the self and puts salutary checks on the stray ramblings of the heart, but Iqbal does not regard it absolutely necessary for human development. Love needs Intellect to steer its course, to keep it confined within the bounds of reality, but Intellect can be ignored with great advantage at times. But if men decide to choose as their sole guide the cool calculating Intellect, they cannot achieve much. Hussain guided by Love faced the ordeals of Karbalā, despising the counsel of Intellect, and look at the result ! Today all over the world millions of men of all colours and races think of him with respect and affection. Arrayed against him was Yazīd guided solely by Intellect, and people all over the world think of him with feelings of horror and disgust :

بے خطر کو دہڑا آتش نرود میں عشق  
عقل ہے محو تماشاے لب بام ابھی

Love jumped into Nimrod's fire unhesitatingly,  
Intellect is still hesitating and watching from the roof-top !

To understand Iqbal's appreciation of the relative importance of Love and Intellect, we can do no better than give the following quotation from a writer :—

“ Iqbal's Love is Plato's Ruler, who must hold sway, and his Intellect corresponds to the Auxiliary of Plato whose function is guarding and whose duty is to obey and help the Ruler.”

Sometimes Love causes depression and the poet starts complaining :

آشنا ہر خار را از قصہٴ ما ساختی  
در بیابان جنون بردی و رسوا ساختی  
جرم ما از داندہٴ تقصیر او از سجدہٴ  
نے بآن بیچارہ می سازی نہ با ما ساختی  
طرح نوا فگن کہ ماجدت پسند افتادہ ایم  
این چہ حیرت خانہٴ امروز و فردا ساختی

Thou hast informed every thorn of our story,  
Thou hast dragged me in the desert of madness and  
exposed the whole affair !  
Our sin consisted in eating the forbidden fruit. His  
mistake was in refusing to bow,  
Neither hast Thou kept up with that hapless one nor with  
Lead us into new path for we love fresh adventures [us !  
What is in this mystery-house of today and tomorrow ?

Love does not recognise conventional distinctions :

فرقی نہ ہند عاشق و رکعبہ و بتخانہ  
 این جلوت جانانہ آن خلوت جانانہ  
 شادم کہ مزار من در کوئے حرم بستند  
 راہے زمرہ کاؤم از کعبہ بہ بتخانہ  
 در دشت جنون من جبریل ز بون صیدے  
 یزدان بہ کمند آورائے ہمت مردانہ  
 اقبال بہ منبر ز درازے کہ نہ باید گفت  
 نا پختہ برون آمد از خلوت میخانہ

A lover knows not the difference between the Ka'ba and the  
 the Idol-House.

For him this is the common and that the exclusive meeting  
 place of the Beloved.

I am happy that they have built my grave in the precincts of  
 the Ka'ba,

From there I shall make a way with my eyelashes to the  
 Idol-House !

In the forest of my love Gabriel is a humble prey,

Try to capture God Himself O manly resolve !

Iqbal has proclaimed from the pulpit the secret that was  
 not to be divulged,

Perchance he has emerged raw from the solitude of the  
 Tavern.

Let us now consider Iqbal's position among the lyrical poets of Urdu and Persian. Both these languages have produced some very fine lyrical poets. The very mention brings to our mind master-artists like Hāfiz, Ṣā'ib, Khusrau, Ghālib, Meer, Dāgh, and many others.



All these would be ranked by any critic amongst the greatest lyrical poets of the world. The poetry of Ḥāfiẓ is of such a high order that it has extorted admiration even from Goethe. Naturally it will be interesting to determine Iqbal's position in this galaxy of great artists. While the greatness of lyrical poets in Urdu and Persian cannot be denied, all these poets have certain defects, the chief of which are :

(i) Except in a few lyrics there is a lack of unity of theme. The theme changes in each line. This robs a lyric poem of effect.

(ii) Sincerity of utterance is lacking in Urdu and Persian lyric poetry, mainly because the poets have never experienced the emotions they try to portray. To take one instance, every lyrical poet in Urdu and Persian sings of love but most of the poets passed their lives in monasteries or in cloisters so that they never knew what love was. When Abū Sa'id Abu'l-Khair introduced mysticism in poetry matters improved considerably, as many poets were mystics, but even in the domain of mysticism an atmosphere of unreality soon spread, because it is not given to all of us to appreciate or partake of mystical experiences, and the essence of all lyrical poetry is personality. Some of the poets who aped mysticism openly said :

این نشہ با من نیست گر باد گرے هست

'If I am not under this intoxication, others are.'

Another great poet said about mysticism :

برائے شعر گفتن خوب است

'It is a good theme for verse-making.'

Lyrical poetry written by poets with such mentality was bound to be lifeless and ineffective.

(iii) There is something unnatural about most of the lyrical poetry in the Urdu and Persian languages. Apart from the fact that there is a suffocating overbloom of feeling, the sentiments themselves are not such that a majority of readers can share them. For example, a sweetheart, according to the majority of the poets, is a villain, a tyrant, a sadist, an unscrupulous rogue, and so on. These are not the feelings which one would entertain towards an object of love.

While the above defects are found in a majority of Urdu and Persian poets, it must be stated that there are important exceptions. As a matter of fact even the mention of such defects may come as a surprise to a large number of readers who have read lyrical poetry in these languages, because the charm of the poetry is irresistible and undeniable. The secret of this great charm lies in the beauty of language and vividness of imagery, but unfortunately the harmony between the subject and its medium is lacking. The sentiments portrayed are in most cases unreal and in some cases unnatural, but the beauty of the language is so overpowering that few pause to analyse the sentiments. When we remember that Iqbal's lyrics are free from all these blemishes, and in addition are permeated with a spirit of virility which is singularly lacking in all Oriental poetry, it will not be difficult to determine Iqbal's place among Urdu and Persian lyrical poets. He ranks with the greatest poets in the two languages : with Ḥāfiẓ and

Ghālib. The very fact that Iqbal is put in the same class as Hāfiz means his inclusion in that select band to which no more than a dozen poets of the world can gain admittance. It is true that Iqbal did not write much lyric verse. In fact the amount is very small as compared with the works of well-known lyrical poets in Urdu and Persian ; but as remarked by an English writer when referring to Housman, nobody finds fault with a violin because it has only a few strings.

The following poems will demonstrate the universal appeal of Iqbal's lyrical poetry :

صورت نہ پرستم من ، بتخانہ شکستم من  
 آن سیل سبک سیرم ، ہر بند گستم من  
 در بود و نبود من اندیشہ گمانا داشت  
 از عشق ہویدا شد ، ایں نکتہ کہ ہستم من  
 در دیر نیاز من ، در کعبہ نماز من  
 ز نار بدوشم من ، تسبیح بدستم من

Not inclined to worship the apparent, I broke the Idol-  
 House ;

I am that rushing torrent which sweeps aside all obstacles  
 About my being or not-being, Intellect had doubts,  
 Love revealed the secret that I am !

In a temple I offer homage, in Ka'ba I offer prayers,  
 I have the sacred thread round my shoulders and a rosary  
 in my hand !

کبھی اے حقیقت منتظر! نظر آبا س مجاز میں  
 کہ ہزاروں سجدے تڑپ رہے ہیں مری جبین نیاز میں  
 طرب آشنائے 'خروش' ہو، تو نوا ہے محرم گوش ہو  
 وہ سرود کیا کہ چھپا ہوا ہو سکوت پردہ ساز میں  
 نہ کہیں جہاں میں اماں ملی، جو اماں ملی تو کہاں ملی  
 مرے جرم خانہ خراب کو ترے عفو بندہ نواز میں  
 جو میں سر بہ سجدہ ہوا کبھی تو نہیں سے آنے لگی صدا  
 ترا دل تو ہے صنم آشنا تجھے کیا ملے گا نماز میں

For once O awaited Reality reveal Thyself in a form material,  
 For a thousand prostrations are quivering eagerly in my  
 submissive brow.

Know the pleasure of tumult : thou art a tune consort with  
 the ear !

What is that melody worth which hides itself in the silent  
 chords of the harp.

My dark misdeeds found no refuge in the wide world—  
 The only refuge they found was in Thy benign forgiveness.  
 Even as I laid down my head in prostration a cry arose from  
 the ground :

Thy heart is enamoured of the Idol, what shalt thou gain by  
 prayer ?

## CHAPTER VII

### HIS *MATHNAWIS*

There are critics who maintain that a long poem is really a contradiction in terms, because, according to them, poetry is essentially the language of excitement, and, as excitement is always of brief duration, there can be no such thing as a long poem. While the force of this argument cannot be totally denied, it must be said that this criticism of long poems is to a certain extent based on a misunderstanding of the true nature of poetry. While the universal appeal of short poems, mostly lyrical, cannot be denied, it must be admitted that long poems, by giving the poet an opportunity for sustained effort, provide a truer test of his art. Even the greatest poets find it difficult to keep up the glow of thought for any length of time, and for this reason even some of the best poems of the world contain dull passages ; and it is only the superb artists who are capable of keeping out dullness when excitement is not supreme. The true measure of any great poet is provided not only by the grace and energy of his flight, but by his power of sustaining the flight. The grace of the flight has to be maintained when emotional fervour is at low ebb, and it is obvious that only the greatest can achieve this. While it will be wrong to suggest that the excellence of a poem depends upon its length, it can safely be said that a long poem can be successfully composed only by a great poet. Professor, E. De Selincourt has very clearly pointed out the

difficulties of composing long poems in the following remarks :

" Naturally enough, the long poem has not, throughout, the intensity demanded of the lyric ; but its great moments are the more telling in that they are set in a wider context of thought and feeling. In the lyric we must supply this context for ourselves, and often fail adequately to supply it ; in the longer poem we reach the heights step by step with the poet, following the same path as he had traversed ; and his poem is far greater in its total effect upon us either than the mere sum of its finest parts or than a sheaf of separate lyrics. The argument against the long poem implies a simple antithesis between pure poetry and bald prose, whereas prose and poetry shade imperceptibly into one another, and the poet's aim is accomplished if his less inspired passages are lifted by style and metre so securely above the level of prose that the poetic impression is not disturbed. That all poets have not achieved this is true enough. To maintain a mastery of form when the emotional pitch is low needs a finer technical skill than to write well under the compelling influence of strong emotion."\*

While our appreciation of long and short poems depends a good deal upon our temperament, the study of a poet's long poems is necessary in order to arrive at a true estimate of his poetic art, because it is only the long poems that provide a true and correct test. Iqbal has written a number of long poems, and, barring his elegies, all his long poems can be classified as Mathnawīs—a very wide class of poetry. According to the usual classification adopted in Persian and Urdu prosody, Mathnawīs can be best described as many-rhymed poems, as opposed to the

\*" The Testament of Beauty " by E. De Selincourt in the *Hibbert Journal*, April 1930.

one-rhymed poems, *ghazals* and *qaṣīdās*, in which there is no internal rhyming in the *bayts*, except the first. The *Mathnawī* was really started because it was found very difficult to keep on one rhyme in a long poem, as was necessary in *ghazals* and *qaṣīdās*. All long poems in Persian and Urdu like the *Shah Nāmāh* of Firdausī, the *Sikander Nāmāh* of Nizāmī, and the *Sahr-al-Bayān* of Mīr Ḥasan are in the forms of *Mathnawīs*. As pointed out by Professor E. G. Browne in his *Literary History of Persia*, most European poetry which is not written in blank verse belongs to this category, Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* furnishing an excellent example. It must be remarked here that this classification by form is, perhaps more than any other classification of poetry, only formal and not of any great help in study. Nevertheless it is always convenient to have a classification.

A list of the more important *Mathnawīs* by Iqbal is given below :

*Asrār-i-Khudī*,  
*Rumūz-i-Bekhudī*,  
*Taskhīr-i-Fiṭrat*,  
*Gulshan-i-Rāz Jadīd*,  
*Bandagī Nāmāh*,  
*Tulū'-i-Islam*,  
*Khidr-i-Rāh*,  
*Musāfir*,  
*Pas chai bāyad kard*,  
*Sāqī Nāmāh*, and  
*Jāvid Nāmāh*.

Out of the above poems only *Asrār-i-Khudī*,

*Rumūz-i-Bekhudī*, *Musāfir*, *Pas chai bāyad kard* and *Jāvid Nāmah* were published as separate books. *Taskhir-i-Fiṭrat* is included in *Payām-i-Mashriq*, and *Gulshan-i-Rāz* *Jadīd* and *Bandagī Nāmah* are included in *Zabūr-i-‘Ajam*. *Sāqī Nāmah* is included in *Bāl-i-Jibraīl*.

Classification by form does not give us any idea of the substance of a poem, and for any proper critical appreciation it is necessary to attempt a classification of *Mathnawīs* according to the substance. For instance, a *Mathnawī* may be epic, philosophic, didactic, or narrative. And so merely to say that a poem is a *Mathnawī* does not convey very much except to give us an indication of its length. In the case of Iqbal's *Mathnawīs* it can be said that most of them represent philosophic poetry. When we mention philosophic poetry, we have to bear in mind the strong prejudice against all poetry which is supposed to be philosophic, although this prejudice is based on a misunderstanding. The line of division between lyric and philosophic poetry is after all a thin one, because a philosophic poem exhibits the poet's intensity of passion just like a lyric. As regards philosophy itself, no poet can really compose a great poem unless he has a background of ideas and the highest moral perception. As remarked by Ruskin: "that art is the greatest which conveys to the spectator, by any means whatsoever, the greatest number of the greatest ideas."\* Whether we entirely agree with this dictum or not, it cannot be denied that a poet's

\**Modern Painters*, Part I, Section 1, Chapter III.



ideas considerably influence his art by intensifying the emotional intensity of all that he writes. But we must remember that in philosophical poetry we have to consider the value of the thought along with the poet's success in giving it a poetic rendering. If the poet is capable of achieving success in poetic rendering, the background of ideas not only serves to quicken the emotional pitch of all that he writes but also enriches his art. "We do not, therefore, quarrel with any poet who offers us philosophy in the fashion of poetry. We require only that this philosophy shall be transfigured by imagination and feeling; that it shall be shaped into a thing of beauty; that it will be wrought into true poetic expression; and that thus in reading him we shall always be keenly aware of the difference between his rendering of philosophic truth and any mere prose statement of it. These conditions fulfilled, we welcome the poet as teacher and moralist, because we know that in his hands the truths of life and conduct will acquire a higher potency and value."\*

If we analyse the prejudice against philosophic poetry, it will be found that generally this is not due to the fact that a poem is philosophic but to the fact that it is not poetry at all. One has only to refer to Pope's *Essay on Man* which only represents philosophical tags versified and is not high poetry at all. Generally speaking it can be said that if a poet can succeed in giving his philosophical ideas perfect poetical rendering poetry gains by philoso-

\*W. H. Hudson : *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*, p. 124.

phy. Philosophical poems are common in Persian, and most of these represent poetry of a very high order. It was Nizāmī who in his *Sikander Nāmah Bahārī* first recounted abstruse philosophical discussions in beautiful poetry. Among Iqbal's philosophical poems may be mentioned :—

*Asrār-i-Khudī,*  
*Rumūz-i-Bekhudī,*  
*Gulshan-i-Rāz,*  
*Bandagī Nāmah,*  
*Pas chai bāyad kard.*

All these represent excellent poetry. The passionate eloquence imparts to the poems a richness of effect which is most noticeable in spite of the simplicity of the language. The style throughout is grand—vigorous yet musical, clear yet suggestive. *Asrār* and *Rumūz* both contain several fables and apologues, one or two retold from modern European authors. These serve to keep the reader's attention gripped and relieve the monotony to a great extent. *Asrār-i-Khudī* describes the principles which govern development of individuals. In *Rumūz*, Iqbal has described the basic principles on which the organisation of ideal human society should be based. In illustrating these truths he has drawn freely from Islamic tenets, so much so that some critics have even gone to the extent of saying that *Rumūz* describes Islamic teachings. Thus, according to Iqbal, human society can be properly organized only if we recognize the fundamental principle of human brotherhood, and, as explained elsewhere, this is not stressed so repeatedly

in any other society as in the Islamic. In his search for the concrete, Iqbal had to turn to some existing social system. As remarked by Shairp: "It is true that poetry refuses to be made the handmaid of any one philosophy or view of life or system of belief, but it is equally true that it naturally allies itself only with what is highest and best in human nature; and in whatever philosophy or belief this is enshrined, thence poetry will draw its finest impulses."\*

We must remember that the truth is one, although its apt presentment shows a different facet in different contexts. Thus some of Iqbal's references to Islamic society can be applied with equal force to other forms of society.

In both *Asrār* and *Rumūz*, the lyrical invocations at the end are most remarkable for the choice diction, ardour of passion, and eloquent spontaneity.

*Asrār-i-Khudi* attracted world-wide attention owing to its translation into English by Professor R. A. Nicholson. Many Western critics considered the poem a classic. In his introduction the translator said: "The artistic quality of the poem is remarkable when we consider that its language is not the author's own. I have done my best to preserve as much of this as a literal translation would allow. Many passages of the original are poetry of the kind that once read, is not easily forgotten, e.g., the description of the Ideal Man as a deliverer for whom the world is waiting, and the noble invocation which brings the book to an end."

\*J. C. Shairp: *Aspects of Poetry*, p. 29.

*Gulshan-i-Rāz Jadīd* deals with abstruse metaphysical and mystical problems. The poet sets himself nine questions and then goes on to give replies to them. After going through the poem, a reader is reminded of the following remarks by Goethe: "I am inclined to believe that poetic art is possibly the only instrument which can at all suffice to express such mysteries; they would have an absurd effect in prose, because they can only be conveyed by contradictions which the reason is not prepared to accept."\*

The poem is named after the *Mathnawī* of Maḥmūd *Shabistārī* called *The Secret Rose Garden*. Sa'dud-Din Maḥmūd *Shabistārī* was born at *Shabistar*, a village eight miles from Tabriz, about 1250 A.D.† One Mīr Husainī Ḥalvī had put Maḥmūd seventeen questions on mysticism in a meeting. Maḥmūd gave replies to all these questions in verses then and there. Later on he amplified these verses, and the collection was published as *Gulshan-i-Rāz* or *The Secret Rose Garden*. Iqbal in his poem deals with similar problems in a new light.

*Bandagī Nāmah* is a poem on the evils of slavery, and its object is to bring home to the readers the fundamental truth that human personality can develop only in an atmosphere of freedom. Slavery in any form, political or economic, thwarts human development and distorts creative impulses in man, with the result that slaves come to entertain false ideas even about fine arts. Referring to the artis-

\* E. Ludwig : *Goethe* p. 544.

† F. Lederer in the Introduction to *The Secret Rose Garden*, p. 11.

tic tendencies of free and healthy people, Iqbal describes the Qutub Minār and the Taj in beautiful language. About the Taj he says:—

یک نظر آن گوهر نابے نگر  
 تاج را زیر متابے نگر  
 مرمش ز آب روان گردندہ تر  
 یک دم آنجا از ابد پایندہ تر  
 عشق مردان سر خود را گفته است  
 سنگ را بانوک مثرگان سفته است  
 عشق مردان نقد خوبان را عیار  
 حسن را ہم پردہ در ہم پردہ دار

Look awhile on that pearl of great purity !

Look at the Taj in a moon-lit night !

Its marble seems to flow more rapidly than gushing water,  
 A moment spent there is longer than eternity !

Man's soul has here revealed its secret,

Has pierced stones with slender things like eyelashes.

Man's love is a standard for judging beauty,

It serves to hide as well as to reveal beauty !

It is by descriptive verses like these that Iqbal avoids any feeling of monotony or tedium in a reader even in his long philosophical poems.

✓ Some of Iqbal's *Mathnawīs* represent epic poetry, the most notable being *Taskhīr-i-Fiṭrat* and *Jāvid Nāmāh*. The classification of poetry can be based

on various considerations, and one method of classification is the classic division into epic, lyric and dramatic ; but like all other divisions this is, after all, only formal and mechanical. It is unnecessary to discuss here what constitutes epic poetry ; it will be sufficient to say that if Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Dante's *Divine Comedy* are epic poems, then *Taskhīr-i-Fiṭrat* and *Jāwīd Nāmāh* are also epic. Discussing epic poetry W. B. Worsfold says :—

“ On the other hand, the composition of this form of poetry is characterised by an essential difficulty which makes its successful execution exceedingly rare. Its form is so great that it requires a vast volume of thought, and thought of the highest kind, to endow it with dignity, and genuine and powerful source of inspiration to endow it with life. Properly it should sum up the thought of an epoch or give expression to the aspirations of a people ; and that is why in the nature of things the great epics can almost be counted upon the fingers of two hands : Hindu epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the *De Nature* of Lucretius, the *Aeneid*, the *Nibelungen Lied*, the *Inferno*, and *Paradise Lost*.”\*

In *Taskhīr-i-Fiṭrat* or “ Conquest of Nature ” Iqbal has retold the story of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* from the human point of view instead of a sectarian outlook, as was done by Milton. Iqbal was attracted by the theme from his youth, and it was only owing to his preoccupation with other works that he did not attempt this work on a wider canvas. According to Iqbal man can regain Paradise not through anybody's intercession, but by developing his ego and thus gaining sway over the world of matter. To regain Paradise each man has

\* W. B. Worsfold : *Judgement in Literature*, p. 83.

to rely on himself and not on vicarious atonement. The poet has dealt with the subject in an entirely original and graceful manner and has depicted the whole drama of man, his creation, his fall and his redemption through his efforts. The keynote of the poem is faith, and every line serves to inspire the reader with faith in himself and in his ability to carry out his glorious mission on this earth. Iqbal has not written anything which is richer in music or more alive with passionate feeling.

But Iqbal's magnum opus is *Jāvid Nāmah*. Within few years of its publication the poem became a classic, and one great scholar proclaimed that the poem will rank with Firdausi's *Shāh Nāmah*, Rūmī's *Mathnawī*, Sa'di's *Gulistān* and the *Dīwān* of Ḥāfiẓ. Nor was this tribute an exaggeration as subsequent criticism showed. In this poem the poet accompanied by Rūmī, who is to him what Virgil is to Dante, visits the various planets and meets historical personalities who in their dialogues elucidate eternal truths.

In judging a poem we have to consider two things : the style and the substance. So far as the style is concerned, *Jāvid Nāmah* belongs to the very first rank of Persian verse. It is unsurpassed in grandeur of expression, in beauty of diction, and in richness of illustration. As regards theme, the poem deals with the everlasting conflict of the soul, and by telling the story of human struggle against sin, shows to mankind the path to glory and peace. In every line the poet makes us feel that he has something to say that is not only worth saying,

but is also fitted to give us pleasure. Thus, as regards style as well as theme the poem is a masterpiece.

Before the start of the journey, Zarwān, embodiment of Time and Space, asks the poet to become independent of these limitations, and as soon as the poet does this he feels himself transported to a place where he can listen to the song of the stars welcoming him.

The poet first visits the Moon. Here Rūmī introduces him to an Indian sage, known as Jehān Dost or the "Lover of Creation" who is seated under a tree absorbed in meditation in the fashion of an Indian Yogi. In his talk with the Indian sage Rūmī makes it clear that for man the way to progress lies through the synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures. East has been concentrating on the spiritual and neglecting the material, while West has been concentrating on the material and neglecting the spiritual.

شرق حق را دید و عالم را ندید

عرب در عالم غزید از حق رمید

The East saw God but failed to see the world of matter ;  
The West got embroiled in the world and neglected God.

The sage agrees with Rūmī's remarks but conveys to the poet the heartening news that the dormant East is after all going to wake up from sleep and to get busy. After a brief discussion on the secrets of life, the sage disappears. The poet then meets Sarosh, the *houri* of optimism, who sings an inspiring song every note of which vibrates with optimism :—



اے زاہدِ ظاہر بینِ گیرم کہ خودی فانی است  
لیکن تو نہ می بینی طوفان بہ حباب اندر

O pious one who can see only superficialities I grant that the  
self is mortal,  
But thou hast failed to see the tempest concealed in the  
bubble.

Later on the poet goes over to the Valley of Yarghmeed, where he comes across the tablets of Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ and Muḥammad—the four great spiritual leaders and teachers of mankind. The poet does not meet the prophets in person but only comes across the tablets, and he illustrates the teachings of the prophets through the mouths of four personalities. Buddha's teachings are explained through the mouth of a dancing girl who embraces Buddhism at the great leader's hand, and Zoroaster's teachings are described through the the devil Aharman. Similarly Christ's teachings are explained through the mouth of Tolstoy, and Muḥammad's through the criticism of Abū Jahal, his inveterate opponent. Abū Jahal says:—

سینہ ما از محمد داغ داغ  
از دم او کعبہ را گل شد چراغ  
از ہلاک قیصر و کسریٰ سرود  
نوجوانان را ز دست ما ربود

پاش پاش از ضربتش لات و منات  
 انتقام از وے بگیر اے کائنات  
 مذہب او قاطع ملک و نسب  
 از قریش و منکر از فضل عرب  
 در نگاہ او یکے بالا و پست  
 با غلام خویش بر یک خوان نشست

We are utterly heart-sick because of Muḥammad,  
 His teachings have put out the lights of Ka'ba !  
 He talks of the extinction of Kaiser and Khusrau,  
 And has taken away the youth from our hold.  
 His attacks have shattered the prestige of Lāt and Manāt,  
 O Universe wreak vengeance on him !  
 His religion abolishes distinctions of race and blood,  
 Though from the Quraish he disowns superiority of the Arabs.  
 In his religion the high and low are but one,  
 He ate out of the same dish with his slave !

The poet is then transported to Mercury where he meets Jamālud-Dīn Afghānī and Sa'īd Ḥalīm Pāsha, the two great Eastern personalities of the nineteenth century. Here Rūmī introduces the poet as Zinda Raud or the Living River, a name that the poet henceforth uses throughout the book. In his answers to the questions of Afghānī, the poet describes the mistakes of Eastern nations, especially the Turks, the Persian and the Arabs are making in Westernising themselves. Sa'īd Ḥalīm Pāsha compares the East and the West and points

out that the salvation of mankind lies in the synthesis of the two cultures, or, as the poet puts it, in wedding reason to love :—

غریبان را زیر کی ساریات  
 شرقیان را عشق راز کائنات  
 زیر کی از عشق گردد حق شناس  
 کار عشق از زیر کی محکم اساس  
 خیز و نقش عالم دیگر بنه  
 عشق را بازیر کی آمیز ده

In the West Intellect is the source of life,  
 In the East Love is the basis of life.  
 Through Love Intellect gets acquainted with Reality,  
 And Intellect gives stability to the work of Love.  
 Arise and lay the foundations of a new world,  
 By wedding Intellect to Love.

The women here live simple lives without any of the modern vices, and great importance is attached by all to the spiritual values of things. Sa'īd Ḥalīm Pāshā then tells Zinda Raud that the religion of God has been fouled by the fanatic Mullā, whose sole

function seems to be creating trouble :—

دین کافر فکر و تدبیر جهاد دین ملا فی سبیل اللہ فساد

The religion of *Kāfir* consists in planning for *Jihād*,\* [God ! The religion of *Mullā*† means creating trouble in the name of

*Afghānī* then exhorts the poet to communicate to the Russian people his message in which he compares Islam with Bolshevism. According to *Afghānī* there is much in common between Islam and Bolshevism as both aim at the destruction of auto-cracy in the world, both view capitalism with disfavour, and both disapprove of priesthood and the church as organised institutions. But while those professing Islam do no more than lip service to its teachings, and even while professing its tenets are not imbued with the true spirit underlying them, the Russians are still entangled in Western intellectualism and materialism, with the result that both the great movements have lost their life-force. Now it is time for the Russians to get rid of Western materialism and accept the Qur'ān as their code, which only means wedding Reason to Love.‡

\* *Jihād* means earnest and ceaseless striving in a noble cause involving the sacrifice, if need be, of life, person or property.

† *Mullā* is the self-styled priest of Islam, which as a religion recognizes no priesthood.

‡ That similarity between Islam and Communism has been noticed by other writers also will be apparent from the following remarks. H. A. L. Fisher says: "For though Russian Communism denounced religion as 'the opium of the people,' it bore like Islam, the marks of a religious faith." (*A History of Europe*, p. 1187).

S. M. H. Kidwāi says: "Islam even anticipated the ideology of Bolsheviks. Officials were called '*Āmilīn* (Commissars), see IX: 60 and LXXXIV: 156. The Prophet was called *Ṣaḥābakūm* (LIII: 2), 'your comrade' and so forth." (*Pan-Islamism and Bolshevism*, p. 322).

Note—Numbers in the above quotation refer to the verses of the Qur'ān.

From Mercury the poet is transported to Venus, where he visits the abode of the ancient gods. The poet finds the gods exulting over the defeat of religion by the modern forces of materialism and irreligiousness. Rūmī takes the poet to a region underneath a river where the proud Pharaoh and Kitchener reside. Pharaoh is full of regrets that he failed to acknowledge allegiance to Moses, and warns others to be more careful in such matters. Rūmī compares autocracy as well as imperialism to robbery, to which Kitchener takes exception.

From Venus, the poet is taken to Mars, where he meets an astronomer. The poet finds that although the people here surpass the Europeans in the study of sciences and arts, the materialistic tendencies of modern Europe are not noticeable. The sage of Mars tells the poet that they had their Adam in one Barkhiya whom their Satan known as Farzmarz, tried to mislead, but as Barkhiya was able to resist the guiles of Farzmarz, the Almighty bestowed on the people the delightful world of Mars. The poet describes in beautiful language the city of Marghdīn, the capital of the planet. One finds no coinage, no machines, no demonstration of militarism and no mendacious propaganda on the planet. All labourers enjoy the fullest benefit of their labour, and there are no capitalists to suck their blood.

The poet then discusses with the sage the problem of destiny. According to the sage, it is possible for man to change his destiny, and man must try to gain perfect mastery of his destiny :—

گر ز یک تقدیر خون گردد دیگر      خواه از حق حکم تقدیر دگر  
 تو اگر تقدیر نو خواهی رواست      ز آنکه تقدیرات حق لا انتماست

If one destiny does not suit thee,  
 Desire from God a different destiny;  
 Thy demand for a new destiny is becoming,  
 For God can decree numerous destinies.

Before leaving Mars the poet meets the virgin from Europe, brought to Mars by Farzmarz to create trouble. This virgin exhorts women to eschew maternity and not to submit to men who are merely out to dominate women.

The poet is then taken to Jupiter where he meets the poet Ghālib, the poetess Ṭāhira and the mystic Manṣūr Hallāj. The poet discusses the philosophy of life and death with these persons. While these conversations were going on, Satan appears on the scene. The description of Satan's character attempted by the poet in several other poems is amplified here. Satan is described as a person who likes separation in preference to union. He is a great egotist, for instance when he says that he uplifted man from a low position of servility and has given him freedom, which was so necessary for the development of his personality. He complains to God about the weak nature of man who falls such an easy prey to his machinations. He wants a strong adversary so as to be able to measure his strength. Owing to easy triumphs over weak men, life has become monotonous for him, and so he wants to meet an adversary strong enough to

disregard his promptings and evil advice :—

اے خداوند صواب و ناصواب  
 من شدم از صحبت آدم خراب  
 هیچ گه از حکم من سر بر نتافت  
 چشم از خود بست و خود را دریافت  
 فطرت او خام و عزم او ضعیف  
 تاب یک ضربم نیارد این حریف  
 لعبت آب و گل از من باز گیر  
 مے نیاید کودکی از مرد پیر

O master of all—those in the right as well as those in the wrong,  
 Association with mankind has debased me.

Man never failed to comply with my behest,  
 He closed his eyes to himself and never discovered the self.  
 His nature is immature and his resolve is weak,  
 This adversary cannot stand even one blow from me.  
 Take back from me this doll of water and clay,  
 An old man cannot be expected to indulge in childish pranks.

Iqbal's portrayal of Satan's character is entirely original and deserves a detailed study.

The poet then reaches Saturn where he meets those mean souls who have been guilty of treason against their own countries and masters—Mīr Jā'far of Bengal and Ṣādiq of Deccan. The two traitors

are in a boat hopelessly tossed about by a furious tempest in a sea of blood. At this moment India appears with chains and halters of slavery on :—

آسمان شق گشت و حورے پاک زاد  
 پرده را از چهره خود بر کشاد  
 در جبینش نثار و نور لایزال  
 در دو چشم او سرور لایزال  
 حله در بر سبک تر از سحاب  
 تار و پودش از رگ برگ گلاب  
 با خنین خوبی نصیبش طوق و بند  
 بر لب او ناله های درد مند  
 گفت رومی ”روح هند است این نگر  
 از فغانش سوز ما اندر جگر“

The sky burst asunder ushering in a graceful *houri*,  
 Who as she lifted the veil off her face,  
 Displayed a forehead aflame with divine splendour,  
 And two eyes beaming with intoxication of divine love.  
 Her raiment was of material lighter than the clouds,  
 With warp and woof provided by the veins of rose-petals.  
 With all these charms her lot but chains and shackles,  
 And on her lips naught but heart-rending moans.  
 Rūmi said : “ Look ! this is the soul of India,  
 The bitterness of her moans will affect any heart.”

These stirring lines show Iqbal's love and attachment to his motherland ! The *houri* complains



in touching language about the indifference of Indians, who are but slaves of meaningless superstitions and time-worn shibboleths and who fail to pay any attention to their own selves.

The two traitors then give a description of their pitiable conditions, and the climax to their tale of miseries is provided by their reference to the fact that when they went to hell in search of an asylum, hell refused to give them refuge. In fact, hell did not condescend to pollute its flames with the bodies of such ignoble creatures.

Now the poet reaches the trans-Heaven region, and here the first person he meets is Nietzsche, who tried all his life to grasp Godhood but failed in his attempts, because in these attempts he relied mainly on intellect only. After seeing Nietzsche, the poet flies up to a higher region where he sees the palace of Sharfun-Nisā the daughter of 'Abdus Ṣamad, the Governor of the Punjab.

Later on the poet meets the saint Syed 'Alī Hamdānī and the poet Ghanī of Kashmir. The poet refers to the sale of Kashmir in the following touching lines :—

باد صبا اگر بہ جمنیوا گذر کنی  
 حرفے ز ما بہ مجلس اقوام باز گوے  
 دہقان و کشت و جوے و خیابان فروختند  
 توے فروختند و چہ ارزان فروختند

O breeze! if you pass by Geneva

Convey this message of ours to the League of Nations—

They sold peasants, crops, rivers and gardens,  
In short, sold a whole nation and that too so cheap!

The poet Ghanī of Kashmir refers with certain pride to the fact that most of the leaders of the political movement in India have been the sons of Kashmir. The poet then meets the Indian poet Bhartrihari and three Eastern potentates, Nādir Shah, Aḥmad Shah Abdālī and Tipū Sultān. Aḥmed Shah Abdālī refers to the growing tendencies in Eastern countries to adopt Western methods of living and styles of dress, and remarks on the futility of this blind imitation :—

قوت مغرب نہ از چنگ و رباب  
نے زرقص دختران بے حجاب  
نے ز سحر ساحران لالہ روست  
نے ز عریان ساق و نے از قطع موسیٰ  
محکمى اورا نہ از لادینى است  
نے فروغش از خط لاطینى است  
قوت افرنگ از علم و فن است  
از ہمین آتش چراغش روشن است  
حکمت از قطع و برید جامہ نیست  
مانع علم و ہنر عمامہ نیست

The secret of the West's strength is not in the lute and guitar,  
Nor in the promiscuous dancing of her daughters.

Nor in the charms of her bright-faced beauties,  
 Nor in bare shins, nor in bobbed hair.  
 Her strength is not from irreligiousness,  
 Nor is her rise due to Latin characters.  
 The strength of the West is due to knowledge and science,  
 Her lamp is alight from this fire only.  
 Knowledge does not depend on the style of your garments,  
 And a turban is no obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge.

As the poet gets ready to leave the trans-Heaven region, he hears the Divine voice. The real secret underlying the development of individuals and communities is explained to him. And here the journey ends.

In the end, the poet addresses the youth through his son Javed. He advises young men to avoid bad company, to love their fellow creatures, and to develop their personality by constant exertion :—

حرف بدر ابر لب آوردن خطاست  
 کافرو مومن همه خلق خداست  
 کم خور و کم خواب و کم گفتار باش  
 گرد خود گردنده چون پر کار باش  
 منکر حق نزد ملا کافر است  
 منکر خود نزد من کافر تر است  
 شیوه اخلاص را محکم بگیر  
 پاک شوا از خوف سلطان و امیر

عدل در قهر و رضا از کف ده  
 قصد در فقر و غنا از کف ده  
 زندگی جز لذت پرواز نیست  
 آشیان با فطرت او ساز نیست

It is wrong to utter a bad word,  
 The infidel\* as well as the faithful† are all God's creations.  
 Eat little, sleep little and talk little,  
 Revolve round self as a compass revolves round the centre.  
 A disbeliever in God is a *Kāfir* according to the *Mullā*,  
 But to me one who does not affirm self is a greater *Kāfir*.  
 Always be sincere in all your dealings,  
 Get rid of the fear of kings and potentates.  
 Do not give up justice under any circumstances,  
 Keep to moderation whether rich or poor.  
 Life is naught but a love for flight,  
 A nest is not the place for it.

What glorious words for youth ! What a beautiful place this world can become if youth will only follow the message contained in the above inspiring lines and also follow the poet's advice about tolerance and mutual good-will.

It is not proposed to attempt here a critical survey of *Jāvīd Nāmāh*. This will need a volume to itself. But some of the outstanding features deserve mention. The most noticeable feature is the marvellous variety of effect produced by the introduction of lyrical interludes, which provide relief against the monotony of the metre. Iqbal has not only put in

\**Kāfir*.†*Momin*.

his own lyrical poems but also those of other Persian poets. In one place he has also translated a Sanskrit lyric. All this serves to heighten the effect of variety by providing changes in rhythm and style at intervals. The second characteristic is the complete absence of any conscious and laboured effort on the part of the poet. Again and again the highest truths are uttered in language so natural and inevitable that it extorts our admiration, and without any effort the poet repeatedly strikes a lofty note. The third characteristic is the idealisation of the characters by giving to them the thoughts and feelings which the poet has experienced himself. To achieve this in spite of the restrictions of metre and rhyme, one must be a great artist. The fourth characteristic of the poem is that the language used by every character reflects his or her personality. The very sound of the words suggests the characteristics of the person talking. The abrupt and blunt way of talking used by Kitchener is in keeping with his soldierly upbringing. The vivacious talk of Satan reflects his great passion for action. A person using the language used by Satan in the poem cannot be imagined to sit idle! The passionate devotion of Tāhira to the cause she espoused is reflected in every word she utters.

The poet displays a delicacy of feeling in not meeting the great prophets of the world in person. He just sees their Tablets. This reference to Tablets brings to our minds the mention of Tablets in the scriptures of the world. For example we read in *Exodus* :—

“ Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them beneath the Mount.”

*Exodus*, XXXII : 19.

In the Qur’ān it is mentioned—

When the anger of Moses  
Was appeased, he took up  
The Tablets : in the writing  
Thereon was Guidance and Mercy  
For such as fear their Lord.

VII : 154.

Another remarkable feature of the poem is the great sympathy and regard with which the poet treats his characters, irrespective of their religious or political views. In fact, the only persons for whom the poet displays any feelings of disgust and contempt are those who proved traitors to their countries and masters. Even when describing these traitors, the language used in the poem is particularly free from abuse or roughness.\* But perhaps the most remarkable feature of the poem is the complete absence of any dull lines. This will scarcely be believed by those who have not read the poem in the original. Even when the poet deals with highly abstruse philosophical or metaphysical problems the dullness of thought never infects the verse. There is no doubt that the poem will rank with the greatest poems of the world.

We have mentioned here only the important philosophical and epic poems of Iqbal. It has

\* In this connection it will be interesting to read the following remarks about Dante : “ But if there is prose in the *Divine Comedy*, as there is violence, obscenity and grotesqueness, there is no feebleness.” H. A. L. Fisher : *History of Europe*, p. 286.

not been possible even to refer to his other *Mathnawīs*. But enough has been said perhaps to indicate clearly, that all those who turn to Iqbal's *Mathnawīs* will find in them a wealth of thought and beauty of art, not easily met even in the greatest poets of the world.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AS A PROSE-WRITER

SOME of the greatest poets of the world have left great works in prose ; and although it is scarcely to be looked for that even the most supreme genius should keep up in prose the lofty level reached in poems like *Paradise Lost*, *Faust* or *Jāvīd Nāmāh*, the prose works of some poets are of sufficient literary merit to entitle the writer to permanent fame among the literary men of the world, and so they deserve our study and attention. Some of the greatest poets in Arabic, Persian and Urdu are equally well-known as prose-writers, so much so that if by any mischance their poetical works were to disappear, the world would be deprived of great works but the literary fame of the poets would survive. One has only to mention al-Ma'arrī, Sa'dī, Ghālib who have left us beautiful works in poetry as well as in prose. Even if he had not left any poetical works, Sa'dī's name would be well-known wherever the Persian language is spoken or understood today. The same can be said of al-Ma'arrī and Ghālib. Poets in other languages equally well-known for their prose writings will suggest themselves. In Greek we have Horace and in Sanskrit we have Bāna, who have both left us beautiful poetry in addition to prose works. In German we have Goethe equally famous for his poetical and prose works. In French there was Victor Hugo ; and in English we have Milton, Coleridge, Scott, Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold and



others. They all wrote with facility in prose as well as in poetry, although in the case of some their writings in the two media could not be considered as of the same literary excellence. It will thus be seen that there is no real incompatibility between writing prose and verse. On the other hand, if secret of all art, as laid down by Croce, lies in expression, it should be possible for all literary artists to excel in expressing themselves both in verse and prose. But it must be admitted that it is not given to all to be versatile in the domain of literary expression and even great poets have not always found it easy to keep up the high level of their poetical art in their prose writings. Although we may agree with Saintsbury that "in prose especially it is possible to gain a very high place, and to deserve it, without any genius at all," we often find that even the greatest masters of verse have failed hopelessly when they applied their hand to prose. Richard Garrett, when referring to the prose writings of Milton, has said: "We must, therefore, agree with Mr. Myers that Milton in a measure exemplifies the maxim 'Prose is for an age, poetry for all time.' "\*

Whether the prose works of great poets are of a sufficiently high order to deserve our attention on their own merits or not, it must be admitted that the study of such writings is always bound to prove interesting and fruitful. In the first place they help us in understanding the working of the poet's mind, and secondly they tend to throw light on the development of the poet's genius. The crudity of Dante's

\* *Prose of Milton*, edited by Richard Garrett, p. ix.

genius which led him to make vulgar attacks on every one who differed from him in religious beliefs can be traced in his theological writings like *Sul Volgare Eloquis*. No student, after reading his *Convito*, can fail to observe that along with superb imagination and wonderful artistic taste there existed in the poet gross narrow-mindedness, a fact mainly responsible for the uneven quality of the *Divine Comedy*. No commentary, no explanations, and no guide can help us in getting an insight into the inner recesses of the author of *Bostān* as a study of *Gulistān* can. No one who has not studied *Gulistān* can truly enjoy the poetical works of Sa'dī. In the case of Iqbal, the prose-writings are of such a high order that a scholar like Sir Dennison Ross has remarked :

“ In 1934, however, he published a series of six lectures, in which he set forth more plainly his philosophy and his ideals for a better world centred in Islam, entitled, ‘ *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* ’ by which he will probably be best remembered.” When a great scholar like Sir Dennison Ross considers that one of Iqbal's prose writings will be esteemed by posterity more than his great poetical works, even though we may not share his view, we should devote some time to the study of his prose.

Iqbal wrote prose in two languages, Urdu and English, and, as in the case of his poetry, it will always remain a debatable point as to which language contains his best work from the literary point of view. Let us first consider his Urdu writings. A list of Iqbal's prose writings in Urdu is as follows :

(1) *Ilmul-Iqtiṣād*.

(2) His masterly prefaces to his poetical works *Asrār-i-Khudī*, *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī*, and *Payām-i-Mashriq*.

(3) His letters.

(4) His pamphlets and articles.

(5) His speeches.

*Ilmul-Iqtiṣād* is the only book in Urdu left by Iqbal, and it is the first book on Economics in the Urdu language. The book is now out of date and also out of print, but its chief interest lies in the fact that it is the first published work of one of the greatest poets of the world. A copy of the book still exists in the Public Library, Lahore. Iqbal himself refers to the book in his letter to Maharajah Sir Kishan Pershād, of 15th April, 1927, as "the first standard book in Urdu on Economics."\*

Iqbal wrote masterly introductions to his first three books of Persian verse namely, *Asrār-i-Khudī*, *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī* and *Payām-i-Mashriq*. Unfortunately introductions to *Asrār-i-Khudī* and *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī* were left out of subsequent editions, but the introduction of *Payām-i-Mashriq* is still there. All the three introductions are masterly essays on subjects connected with the poems. These introductions deserve a permanent place among Urdu essays ; and every critical student will agree that they will secure a very high place for Iqbal in the ranks of Urdu essayists. It is indeed a pity that his multifarious activities did not leave Iqbal any time to write more essays in the Urdu language, because this channel of

\* *Shad Iqbal*, p. 45.

literary expression suited him, since the true essay is the direct play of the author's mind and character upon the subject-matter, and all such compositions suited Iqbal's genius admirably.

All these three introductions are a piece of literature deserving a permanent place in Urdu prose. Their chief characteristic is the prophetic fervour. Even Professor R. A. Nicholson regretted that the introduction to *Asrār-i-Khudī* was left out of the subsequent editions. In the introduction to *Asrār-i-Khudī*, Iqbal surveys briefly, but concisely, the growth of pantheistic mysticism in Islam, and gives a brief historical survey of the influence of neo-Platonic ideas on Islamic thought. This introduction shows his vast learning and his capacity for writing on philosophical and ethical subjects in a graceful style. His consummate command over language is apparent from every sentence, and the flow and spontaneity of language is most impressive. We have only to refer to the opening sentences :

یہ وحدت و جدائی یا شعور کا روشن نقطہ ، جس سے تمام انسانی  
تخیلات و جذبات و تمثیلات مستنیر ہوتے ہیں ، یہ پراسرار شے جو  
فطرت انسانی کی منتشر اور غیر محدود کیفیتوں کی شیرازہ بند ہے ، یہ  
”خودی“ یا ”انا“ یا ”میں“ جو اپنے عمل کی رو سے ظاہر اور اپنی حقیقت  
کی رو سے منصر ہے ، جو تمام مشاہدات کی خالق ہے مگر جس کی لطافت  
مشاہدہ کی گرم نگاہوں کی تاب نہیں لاسکتی کیا چیز ہے ؟ کیا ایک

لازوال حقیقت ہے یا زندگی نے محض ماضی طور پر اپنی فوری عملی اغراض کے حصول کی خاطر اپنے آپ کو اس فریب تخیل یا دروغ مصلحت آمیز کی صورت میں نمایاں کیا ہے۔ اخلاقی اعتبار سے افراد و اقوام کا طرز عمل اس نیایت ضروری سوال کے جواب پر منحصر ہے۔

The introduction to *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī* is brief, but it is also a great composition. His definition of the communal ego is masterly :

جس طرح حیات افراد میں جلب منفعت، دفع مضرت، تعین عمل و ذوق حقائق عالیہ، احساس نفس کے تدریجی نشوونما، اس کے تسلسل، توسیع اور استحکام سے وابستہ ہے۔ اسی طرح مل و اقوام کی حیات کا راز بھی اسی احساس یا بالفاظ دیگر قومی ”انا“ کی حفاظت، تربیت اور استحکام میں مضمر ہے

The introduction to *Payām-i-Mashriq*, in its thoroughness, its critical spirit, and general sweep is unsurpassed in the whole of Urdu literature. Within a few pages Iqbal has presented a masterly survey of the Persian movement in German literature. His command over language exhorts our admiration, while his precision, brevity and scholarly simplicity of language combined with a consummate mastery of his subject impart a special charm to the introduction.



جواب فرم - نیم

برائے کتب خانہ لاہور میں لاہور میں حاضر ہو گیا چلا گیا  
۲۵ اور ۲۶ ر ۲۷ اکتوبر کے کہ ان دنوں میں حال خراب  
سنسٹری ہال میں میری برگہ وہاں ہے لہذا کہ  
ع - حق بننا اصرار ہے - ع

مخلص محمد انار

لاہور ۱۶ اگست ۲۵

اندر کے لئے کتب خانہ لاہور میں لاہور میں حاضر ہو گیا

Facsimile of Iqbal's letter to the author.







As regards Iqbal's letters it must be remembered that Iqbal was a very regular correspondent, and he always replied to letters received by him with great promptitude. Among his correspondents were people from all grades of society, all over the world—mighty potentates, great dictators, eminent philosophers, reputed scholars, well-known politicians and humble students. The whole personality of Iqbal is revealed in the lines of his letters. They show the variety and exuberance of his mind and provide an index to the vastness of his intellect. The chief characteristics of these letters are lack of conventionality, formality and stiffness.

In the art of personal revelation, that rare art which has given immortality to the writings of Montaigne, Goethe and Rousseau, Iqbal stands in the front line. These letters represent a sincere delineation of a soul in its quest of truth. There is a nameless sweetness and freshness in all these letters—a sense of the elemental, and the result is that the letters cease to be domestic documents giving only details of private life.

The letters have a distinct flavour of literature and show a spontaneity, an ease and lightness of style. Occasionally they show depth of emotion and rise to heights of real eloquence, for example in a letter to a friend he writes :

اقبال خواہ لاہور میں رہے، خواہ حیدرآباد میں، خواہ مریخ ستارہ میں،  
وہ غیر محسوس روحانی پیوند جو اس کو سرکار سے ہے انشاء اللہ العزیز  
قائم رہیگا۔ نہ وقت اسے دیر نہ کر سکتا ہے، نہ تعلقات اُسے کمزور

کر سکتے ہیں..... باقی رہی اقبال کی بیرسٹری یا اور کوئی ہنرجو اس بے ہنریں ہے، وہ سب آپ کی خدمت کے لئے وقف ہے۔

Iqbal takes the world into his confidence without reticence or timidity. There is not a line he has written which is not a frank confession of the interests and purposes of a living soul. In a letter he writes :

اقبال کا شعاع ہمیشہ سے محبت و خلوص رہا ہے اور انشاء اللہ رہیگا۔ اغراض کا شائبہ خلوص کو مسموم کر دیتا ہے اور خلوص وہ چیز ہے کہ اس کو محفوظ و بے لوث رکھنا بندہ درگاہ کی زندگی کا مقصود اعلیٰ و اسنی ہے۔

Urdu literature has a vast collection of letters noted for literary excellence, but Iqbal will be regarded by all students as one of the most interesting and impressive letter writers of Urdu. The great essayist and critic, Rashīd Aḥmed Siddiqī, has made the following remarks :

“ In his letters he never indulged in conventional formalities and always replied to every question in a lucid and precise way. Even when touching upon difficult and delicate questions, he was always frank. Like other great men he never believed in couching his replies in language which would leave loopholes for later explanations. He had complete confidence in his replies, the reason for which, in my opinion, was that in addition to being a philosopher, thinker and a lawyer he was a great advocate.”\*

\* R. A. Siddiqi : *Ganjhāi Gerānmāyah*.

Very few of Iqbal's articles, pamphlets and speeches are available today, and this brief reference is made in the hope that it will induce someone to collect and publish these before it is too late. His pamphlets remind us of Milton's pamphlets in English, with only this difference, that both for substance and beauty of language Iqbal's pamphlets on nationalism and other subject constitute a hostage to immortality, and cannot be said to be written only for the age. For an illustration one has only to quote the following passage :—

انسان کی تاریخ پر نظر ڈالو - ایک لانتنا ہی سلسلہ ہے ،  
 باہم آویزشوں کا ، خون ریزیوں کا ، اور خانہ جنگیوں کا - کیا ان  
 حالات میں عالم بشری میں ایک ایسی امت قائم ہو سکتی ہے ،  
 جس کی اجتماعی زندگی امن اور سلامتی پر موسس ہو - قرآن کا  
 جواب ہے کہ ہاں ہو سکتی ہے ، بشرطیکہ توحید الہی کو انسانی فکر و عمل  
 میں حسبِ منشاء الہی مشہود کرنا انسان کا نصب العین قرار پائے -  
 ایسے نصب العین کی تلاش اور اس کا قیام سیاسی تدبیر کا کرشمہ  
 نہ سمجھیے ، بلکہ یہ رحمتہ للعالمین کی ایک شان ہے کہ اقوام بشری کو  
 ان کے تمام خود ساختہ تفاوتوں اور فضیلتوں سے پاک کر کے ایک ایسی  
 امت کی تخلیق کی جائے جس کو اُمَّةٌ مُّسْلِمَةٌ لَّکَ کہہ سکیں اور اس  
 کے فکر و عمل پر شہدائے آلِ النَّاسِ کا خدائی ارشاد صادق آسکے -

In order to give an idea of the literary value of his articles we venture to give an extract from one of his oldest published articles, written in reply to a critic who considered the introduction of Punjabism in the Urdu language a linguistic heresy :—

ابھی کل کی بات ہے اُردو زبان جامع مسجد دہلی کی سیرٹھیوں تک محدود تھی۔ مگر چونکہ بعض خصوصیات کی وجہ سے اس میں بڑھنے کا مادہ تھا اس بولی نے ہندوستان کے دیگر حصوں کو بھی تسخیر کرنا شروع کیا، اور کیا تعجب ہے کہ کبھی تمام ملک ہندوستان اس کے زیر نگیں ہو جائے۔ ایسی صورت میں یہ ممکن نہیں کہ جہاں جہاں اس کا رواج ہو وہاں کے لوگوں کا طریقہ معاشرت ان کے تمدنی حالات اور ان کا طرز بیان اس پر اثر کرے؛ بغیر رہے، علم السنہ کا یہ مسلّمہ اصول ہے جس کی صداقت اور صحت تمام زبانوں کی تاریخ سے واضح ہوتی ہے۔ اور یہ بات کسی لکھنوی یا دہلوی کے امکان میں نہیں کہ اصول کے عمل کو روک سکے۔ تعجب ہے کہ میز، کمرہ، کچہری، نیلام وغیرہ اور فارسی اور انگریزی کے محاورات کے لفظی ترجمے تو بلا تکلف استعمال کرو لیکن اگر کوئی شخص اپنی اُردو تحریر میں کسی پنجابی محاورے کا لفظی ترجمہ یا کوئی پر معنی پنجابی لفظ استعمال کر دے تو اس کو کفر و شرک کا مرتکب سمجھو\*۔

Iqbal was a forceful speaker and a great orator, and there are numerous published reports of his speeches, but very few of his Urdu speeches are available today. The task of collecting these will not be easy but it is hoped that someone will undertake this work. His artistic temperament imparted literary charm to all his speeches.

It has been remarked that it is the prophetic force of Iqbal which is the most remarkable quality and the secret of his abiding influence in all his prose writings. This makes it all the more necessary for us not to overlook the danger that, while valuing him as a teacher, we may overlook his gifts as a man of letters. Whatever we may think of the particular truth which he is enforcing, the manner in which he utters it arrests us. So we must find out what original combination of gifts he possesses as a man of letters. The first characteristic of his style is his lucidity. He was never obscure, and could expound the most intricate and highly technical subject in lucid language :

جس طرح رنگ و بو وغیرہ کے لئے 'مختص حواس' ہیں اسی طرح  
انسانوں میں ایک اور حواس بھی ہے جسکو "حواس واقعات" کہنا چاہیئے۔  
ہماری زندگی واقعات گرد و پیش کے مشاہدہ کرنے اور ان کے  
صحیح مفہوم کو سمجھ کر عمل پیرا ہونے پر منحصر ہے۔ مگر ہم میں سے  
کتنے ہیں جو اس قوت سے کام لیتے ہیں جس کو میں نے "حواس واقعات"  
کی اصطلاح سے تعبیر کیا ہے؟ نظام قدرت کے پراسرار بطن سے واقعات

پیدا ہوتے رہے ہیں اور ہوتے رہینگے، مگر یکن سے پہلے کون جانتا تھا کہ یہ واقعات حاضرہ جن کو نظریات کے دلدادہ فلسفی اپنے تخیل کی بلندی سے بہ نگاہ حقارت دیکھتے ہیں اپنے اندر حقائق اور معارف کا یہ گنج گراں مایہ پوشیدہ رکھتے ہیں۔\*

The second characteristic of Iqbal's style is his command over language. He is a consummate artist with powers of vivid expression unmatched in Urdu literature. He has an inevitable instinct for the right word. His supreme artistic faculty never deserts him and makes him a superb phrase maker. Great artist as he was, he always believed in the selection of words. Very few passages in Urdu compete with the following passage in the choice of language :

رفتہ رفتہ چودھویں صدی کے تمام عجمی شعرا اس رنگ میں رنگین ہو گئے۔ ایرانیوں کی نازک مزاج اور لطیف الطبع قوم اس طویل دماغی مشقت کی کہاں متحمل ہو سکتی تھی جو جزو سے کل تک پہنچنے کے لئے ضروری ہے، انہوں نے جزا اور کل کا دشوار گزار درمیانی فاصلہ تخیل کی مدد سے طے کر کے رگ چراغ میں ”خون آفتاب“ کا اور ”شرار سنگ“ میں ”جلوہ طور“ کا بلا واسطہ مشاہدہ کیا۔†

\* Introduction to *Astār-i-Khudi* (First Edition).

† Ibid.

The third characteristic of Iqbal's style is his virility and vigour. He is always forceful and effective and never dull. The following passage will illustrate this :

مشرق اور بالخصوص اسلامی مشرق نے صدیوں کی مسلسل  
نیند کے بعد آنکھ کھولی ہے، مگر اقوام مشرق کو یہ محسوس کر لینا  
چاہیے کہ زندگی اپنے حوالی میں کسی قسم کا انقلاب پیدا نہیں  
کر سکتی جب تک کہ پہلے اس کی اندرونی گہرائیوں میں انقلاب  
نہ ہو۔ اور کوئی نئی دنیا خارجی وجود اختیار نہیں کر سکتی جب تک  
کہ اُس کا وجود پہلے انسانوں کے ضمیر میں تشکل نہ ہو۔ فطرت کا  
یہ اہل قانون جس کو قرآن نے اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا یُغَیِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰی یُغَیِّرُوْا  
مَا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ کے سادہ اور بلیغ الفاظ میں بیان کیا ہے۔ زندگی کے  
فردی و اجتماعی دونوں پہلوؤں پر حاوی ہے۔ \*

The fourth characteristic of Iqbal's style is his brevity. He puts much meaning in few words. For example :

افراد کی صورت میں احساس نفس کا تسلسل ، قوت حافظہ  
سے ہے، اقوام کی صورت میں اس کا تسلسل و استحکام قومی تاریخ  
کی حفاظت سے ہے۔ گویا قومی تاریخ حیات ملیہ کے لئے بمنزلہ قوت

\* Introduction to *Payām-i-Mashriq*.



حافظہ کے ہے جو اس کے مختلف مراحل کے حیات و اعمال کو مربوط کر کے ”قومی انا“ کا زبانی تسلسل محفوظ و قائم رکھتی ہے۔ علم الحیات و عمرانیات کے اسی نکتہ کو مد نظر رکھ کر میں نے ملت اسلامیہ کی ہئیت ترکیبی اور اس کے مختلف اجزاء و عناصر پر نظر ڈالی ہے، اور مجھے یقین ہے کہ امت مسلمہ کی حیات کا صحیح ادراک اسی نقطہ نگاہ سے حاصل ہو سکتا ہے۔\*

In judging the literary importance of Iqbal's prose writings, we have the following maxim laid down by W. J. Dawson :—

“ The great writers who command not a transient but age-long reverence have usually proved their greatness in one or more of three ways—their writings are personal confessions, that is, they are the intimate and enduring records of the individual soul, they possess the secret of style, by which we mean they are written in such a form that they illustrate, in a supreme degree, the art and mastery of language or they express moral truths of eternal value and infinite moment.”† Judged by these standards it can be safely said that Iqbal's writings are entitled to a permanent and important place in Urdu literature. They fulfil all the three tests laid down by this critic for any writing to attain enduring fame. Every word written by Iqbal is the confession

\* Introduction to *Rumūz-i-Bekḥudī* (first edition).

† W. J. Dawson, *The Makers of Modern Prose*, p. 202, published by Hodder and Stoughton, London.

of a soul with a definite purpose. He talks of truth as he sees it. There is the impress of deliberate egoism on every sentence written by him. As regards excellence of style we have seen how his supreme artistic faculty imparts the glow of genius even to his least considered writings. As for moral truths, it is unnecessary to say any more here; enough has been said to demonstrate the importance of Iqbal's message to his times. It is unfortunately true that his total output in prose is not very great, but that makes it all the more important that we should preserve all that is left.

We have examined briefly Iqbal's works in Urdu, but a study of these alone cannot give us a true idea of Iqbal's influence on Urdu prose. For this we have to keep in mind the inspiring influence he exercised over a band of young authors in several branches of Urdu prose. In spite of monumental works like *Sīrat-an-Nabī* it has to be admitted that Urdu literature is none too rich in biography, and Iqbal always used to say that Urdu needs biographies on the lines of Emil Ludwig's biographical sketches—cross-sections displaying the subject's personality. Similarly about short stories he used to say that, instead of aping the methods of Maupassant and other realist European writers, our budding authors should look for themes to their own history. Sufficient time has not passed to gauge the influence Iqbal exercised on the young Urdu authors, but it can be safely said that recent tendencies in both these branches of Urdu prose indicate that Iqbal's influence on authors who came in contact with him

is already bearing fruit.

Now we have to consider the prose writings of Iqbal in English. Iqbal has left two books in the English language: *Development of Metaphysics in Persia* and *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. In addition to these he wrote several articles and delivered a large number of speeches and lectures in Europe and India. Then we have his letters.

The *Development of Metaphysics in Persia* is a masterly monograph on the growth of metaphysical thought in Persia. Although Iqbal, when permitting a gentleman to translate the book into Urdu, was modest enough to write in 1928 that very little of the book could escape criticism twenty years after its publication, no better compliment could have been paid to the work than the fact that an English firm was willing to publish the book written by a young Indian student at that time hardly known to the literary world. And although Iqbal was always modest whenever he referred to the book, it has been used for purpose of reference by eminent writers. For instance the great English Orientalist, Professor E. G. Browne, says :

“ The other shorter but fuller account of Mulla Sadra's doctrine is given by Sheykh Muḥammed Iqbal, formerly a pupil of Dr. McTaggart in this University of Cambridge, and now himself a notable and original thinker in India in his excellent little book entitled *Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, a contribution to the History of Muslim Philosophy, p. 175, but he devotes much more space to the modern Ḥajji Mulla Hadi of Sabzawar whom he regards as Mulla Sadra's successor, and who unlike his

master, condescended as we shall presently see, to expound his ideas in Persian instead of in Arabic.”\*

The book was most aptly dedicated to Iqbal's friend and teacher, Sir Thomas Arnold, Professor of Arabic in the University of London. As regards the book itself, one may not agree with the conclusions arrived at by Iqbal, yet none can fail to be impressed by the masterly survey of the growth of metaphysical thought in Persia within the pages of a small monograph. The book is written in a masterly style and makes very pleasant reading—thanks to Iqbal's capacity of expressing in pleasant language whatever he wanted to say. For the benefit of those to whom the original book may not be available for reference, the following passage is quoted :

“ It seems to me that the Persian mind is rather impatient of detail, and consequently destitute of that organising faculty which gradually works out a system of ideas, by interpreting the fundamental principles with reference to the ordinary facts of observation. The subtle Brahmin sees the inner unity of things ; endeavours to discover it in all the aspects of human experience, and illustrates its hidden presence in the concrete in various ways, the latter appears to be satisfied with a bare universality, and does not attempt to verify the richness of its inner content. The butterfly imagination of the Persian flies, half-inebriated as it were, from flower to flower and seems to be incapable of reviewing the garden as a whole. For this reason his deepest thoughts and emotions find expression mostly in disconnected verses (*ghazal*) which reveal all the subtlety of his artistic soul. The Hindu, while admitting, like the Persian, the necessity of a higher source of knowledge, yet calmly moves from experience to experience, mercilessly

\* Prof. E. G. Browne : *A History of Persian Literature in Modern Times*, p. 431.

dissecting them, and forcing them to yield their underlying universality. In fact the Persian is only half-conscious of Metaphysics as a system of thought ; his Brahmin brother, on the other hand, is fully alive to the need of presenting his theory in the form of a thoroughly reasoned-out system. And the result of this, mental difference between the two nations is clear. In the one case we have only partially worked-out systems of thought ; in the other case, the awful sublimity of the searching Vedanta.”\*

As regards his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* one can say that Iqbal's philosophy, presented to us in other writings only in dispersed poetic gleams, or in diffused living glow, is here presented in the form of a thesis. The gospel of Iqbal, that is the fullest expression of what he regarded as his spiritual message to his times, will be best learned from this book. The book attracted world-wide attention and, as remarked already, a scholar like Sir Dennison Ross regarded his collection as the most notable writing of Iqbal. Sir Dennison Ross is mistaken in thinking that Iqbal will be best remembered by the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, but his remarks provide an indication of the important place this book occupies among Iqbal's writings.

Lord Lothian in his message to the Muslim Students, Brotherhood, Lahore, said :

“ I am delighted to hear that there is to be a celebration in honour to Sir Muhammad Iqbal on January 9. He is famous as a poet, as a philosopher, and as an interpreter of Islam far beyond the confines of his country. Only recently the Oxford University Press published a book of

\* *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, p. viii.

his philosophic and religious essays which attracted widespread and admiring attention."

These essays are written in elegant English. The language is idiomatic and always impressive, and some of the passages rise to the heights of eloquence. For example :

" 'Muḥammad of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned.' These are the words of a great Muslim saint, 'Abdul-Quddūs of Gangoh. In the whole range of Ṣūfī literature it will be probably difficult to find words which, in a single sentence, disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between the prophetic and the mystic types of consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of 'unitary experience'; and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history, and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals. For the mystic the repose of 'unitary experience' is something final; for the prophet it is the awakening, within him, of world-shaking psychological forces, calculated to transform the human world completely."\*

The dominant note throughout these essays is the prophetic force. It must be remembered that, as a spiritual and moral force, there is no modern writer of the Muslim world who has touched his times so deeply, and Iqbal exercises this influence mainly through these essays besides his inspired poetry.

It is a pity that Iqbal's speeches and articles have not been published so far, but it is

\* *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 118.

hoped that these will be collected and published soon. Iqbal delivered a series of lectures in London when he was studying at Cambridge. He frequently spoke in public on various topics. As in Urdu his lectures in English also covered a great variety of subjects—philosophy, religion and education. He was a graceful and dignified speaker very popular with his audiences, whom he regaled with humorous maxims and interesting anecdotes. He excelled in delivering popular discourses on technical and abstruse subjects. As a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, he delivered important speeches on various subjects. His presidential speech at the 1930 session of the Muslim League, to which a reference has already been made, was an epoch-making oration, not only because it prescribed a new solution of India's political troubles, but also for the wealth of historical, sociological, and political information embodied in it :

“ Thus the upshot of the intellectual movement initiated by such men as Rousseau and Luther was the break-up of the one into mutually ill-adjusted many, the transformation of a human into a national outlook, requiring a more realistic foundation, such as the notion of country, and finding expression through varying systems of polity evolved on national lines, *i.e.*, on lines which recognize territory as the only principle of political solidarity. If you begin with the conception of religion as complete other-worldliness, then what has happened to Christianity in Europe is perfectly natural. The universal ethical system of Jesus is displaced by national systems of ethics and polity. The conclusion to which Europe is consequently driven, is that religion is a private affair of the individual, and has nothing to do with what is called man's

temporal life. Islam does not bifurcate the unity of man into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter."

It is fervently hoped that all Iqbal's speeches, political as well as non-political, will be collected and published soon.

Iqbal was not a prolific contributor to journals and magazines, still he wrote occasionally. In 1902 he contributed an article on Perfect Man to the *Indian Antiquary* of Bombay. It has not been possible to secure a copy of this article. Then about 1916 he contributed a series of articles to the weekly journal *The New Era*, and extracts from these articles have been quoted by Professor R. A. Nicholson in his Introduction to the *Secrets of the Self*.

Like his letters in Urdu, Iqbal's letters in English possess a remarkable literary flavour and a charm all their own. The outstanding literary qualities are elegance of diction, apt use of idiom and the ease with which he writes on the most intricate subjects. It can be said that Iqbal's pent up fervour found an outlet in these letters. Sincerity and frankness which characterise all his writings are most noticeable in his letters, mainly because, unlike Pope, he did not sit at his desk with one eye turned towards his correspondent and the other eye fixed upon the public. His letters, to Mr. M. A. Jinnah have been published, and it is hoped that a complete collection of Iqbal's letters in English will soon be published.









# INDEX

- 'ABDUL KARĪM AL-JĪLĪ, 101-104, 134, 135.  
 'Abdul Qādir, Sir, 2.  
 'Abdul Quddūs of Gangoh, 255.  
 'Abdul Wahāb Anṣarī, Ḥa-kīm, 31.  
 'Abdus Ṣamad, 230.  
 Abraham, 85.  
*Abr-i-Guharbār*, 7.  
 Absorption, as a stage in Love, 75.  
 Abū-Bakr Shaiḥ, 100.  
 Abu'l Fadl, 105.  
 Abū-Jahāl, 222.  
 Abū-Sa'id Abu'l Khair, 196, 206.  
 Abu'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Hujwarī, 109, 110.  
 Abu'l 'Ulā al-Ma'arri, 109, 110, 137, 237.  
 Adam, 97.  
 Adler, 56.  
*Æneid*, 219.  
 Affifi, Dr. A. E., 41, 101.  
 Aḥmed Shāh Abdālī, 231.  
 Aḥmed Sirhindī, Shaiḥ, Mu-jaddid, 41, 105-108.  
 Ahraman, 222.  
 Akbar, 29.  
 Alberti, 3.  
 Albrecht, 2.  
 Alexander, Professor, 143.  
 'Alī, 5.  
 'Alī Bakhsh, 22, 36.  
 Al-Jilī, See 'Abdul Karīm.  
 Al-Ma'arri, See Abul 'Ula.  
*Alnāzir*, 17.  
 Also *Sprach Zarathustra*, 123, 125.  
 Aminūd-Dīn, Ḥakim, 6.  
 Amīr Khusrau, 11, 186, 200, 206, 223.  
*An Evening (Ek Shām)*, 176, 177.  
*Angels' Song and God's Command (Farishton-ka-Geet and Farmān-i-Khudā)*, 159.  
 Anthony, St., 1.  
 Apollo, 128.  
*Arab Cameleer's Melody (Naghma-i-Sārbān-i-Ḥejāz)*, 163.  
 Aristotle, 118, 119.  
*Armughān-i-Ḥejāz*, 20.  
 Arnold, Sir Thomas, 2, 10, 11, 95, 253.  
 Arnold, Matthew, 157, 237.  
 Arshad, 6.  
 Arthur Bryant, 73.  
 Art, 2, 46, 148-150, 152, 210.  
 —Iqbal's Conception of, 144.  
 —Iqbal's Poetic, 145 sqq.  
 —Subjective, 149.  
 Aslam Jairājpurī, Ḥāfiz, 16.  
*Asrār-i-Khudī*, 15 17, 18, 21, 93, 94, 212, 215, 216, 240, 241.  
 Aurobindo Ghose, 111-113.  
 Ash'arites, 114.  
 BACON, 119.  
 Bahaud-Dīn, 92.  
*Bāl-i-Jibra'il*, 20, 94, 194, 195, 213.  
*Bāng-i-Dirā*, 19.  
*Bandagī Nāmah*, 212, 213, 215, 217.  
 Bāqī Billah, Khawāja, 106.  
 Bāqir, Mulla, 114.  
 Baron von Voltheim, 35.  
 Barrie, 52.  
*Bazm-i-Ḥakimān*, 6.

- Beauty, 149, 150, 159, 199, 200.  
 Bedil, 193.  
 Bergson, Henri, 26, 115, 140, 141, 143, 144.  
 Berkeley, George, 119.  
 Bernard Shaw, 50.  
 Bhartrihari, 231.  
 Bhāti Gate, 6.  
 Bible, 8.  
*Bird's Complaint (Parinday-ki-Faryād)*, 7.  
*Book of a Forgotten Prophet, The*, 3, 33.  
*Bostān*, 239.  
 Browne, E. G., 121, 212, 252.  
 Browning, Robert, 188.  
 Buddha, 222.  
 Byron, Lord, 34.  
 Bolshevism, 60, 225.
- CAXTON HALL, 14.  
 Changiz, 146.  
 Christ, 222.  
 Churchill, Winston, 50.  
 Classicism, 152-154, 158.  
 Coleridge, 19, 201.  
*Convito*, 239.  
 Courage, 46, 51.  
 Cowper, William, 131.  
 Croce, 238.
- DARB-I-KALĪM*, 20.  
*Dāgh*, 5, 206.  
*Dahr*, 116.  
 Dante, Aligheri, 20, 93, 152, 219, 220, 235, 238.  
 Dawson, W. J., 250.  
*De Nature*, 219.  
 Descartes, 119.  
*Development of Metaphysics in Persia, The*, 102, 104, 185, 252.  
*Dew (Shabnam)*, 170.
- Didacticism, 154.  
 Diodati, 11.  
 Dionysus, 127, 129.  
 Disraeli, 72.  
*Divine Comedy*, 20, 217, 235, 239.
- ECKERMANN, JOHNN PETER, 23.  
 Einstein, Albert, 144, 151.  
*Ego*, 61-64, 77, 80, 84, 85, 87, 89, 91, 120, 130, 140, 144, 147, 193, 219.  
 —Characteristics of, 43.  
 —Philosophy of, 37 seqq., 74, 78, 111.  
 —Forces fortifying, 46-55, 98, 147.  
 —Forces weakening, 56-60.  
 —Communal, 72, 242.  
 —Divine, 75.  
 —Infinite, 76.  
 —Ultimate, 87.  
 —Fichte's Conception of, 121.  
 —Ghazālī's Conception of, 109.  
*English Saga*, 73.  
*Essay on Man*, 214.
- FAIDI, 105.  
 Fakhrud-Dīn Rāzī, 114.  
*Faqīr*, 49, 50, 79.  
*Faqr*, 46, 48, 49, 50.  
 Farābi, 118.  
 Faridud-Dīn Attār, 196.  
 Faruqi, Dr., B.A., 41, 108.  
 Fātima, Ḥaḍrat, 132.  
 Faust, 20, 94, 237.  
 Fear, 56.  
 Fichte, 121, 144.  
 Firdausī, 20, 212, 220.  
 Fisher, H.A.L., 118, 225, 235.  
 Freud, Sigmund, 56.

- GALILEO, 72.  
 Ganges, the, 8.  
 Garret, Richard, 238.  
Ghālib, 11, 151, 189, 193, 206, 208, 227, 237.  
Ghanī, 231.  
Ghazals, 185-187, 192, 193, 212.  
Ghazālī, 77, 95, 108, 109.  
 Girāmī, 24.  
 Gītā, 41.  
 Goethe, J. W. Von, 3, 20, 23, 34, 94, 151, 153, 206, 217, 237, 243.  
 Government College, Lahore, 15, 27.  
 Grunewald Mathis, 1, 2.  
*Gulistān*, 220, 239.  
*Gulshan-i-Rāz Jadīd*, 212, 213, 215, 216.  
  
 HADDON, A.C., 60.  
 Hadi, Mulla Haji, 252.  
 Hāfiz, 11, 17, 95, 134, 152, 189, 192, 193, 200, 206, 208, 220.  
 Hākīm, Dr. Khalifa 'Abdul, 97.  
 Hākīm Quraishī, 36.  
 Halide Edib, 56.  
 Hamlet, 20.  
 Ḥasan Akhtar, Rajah, 36.  
 Ḥasan Mīr, author of *Saḥr-al-Bayan*, 212.  
 Hasan Mīr, 4, 5, 10.  
 Hellenic thought, 39.  
 Hellenistic, graft on Islamic thought, 118.  
 Himalayas, the, 6.  
 Ḥimāyat-i-Islam, Anjuman, 7.  
 Hindemath, 1.  
 Hirayanna, Professor, 39.  
 Hisāmud-Dīn Chalpi, 93.  
 Homer, 20.  
 Horace, 237.  
 Housman, 208.  
 Hudson, W. H., 214.  
 Hume, David, 119.  
 Hussain, 203.  
 Hussaini, Mīr, 217.  
 Huxley, J.S., 60.  
  
 IBNUL 'ARABĪ, 40, 85, 100, 101, 102, 104, 106, 107, 108, 134.  
 Ibn-i-Ḥazm, 114.  
 Ibn-i-Khaldūn, 114, 115.  
 Ibn-i-Taymiyya, 41, 104, 105.  
 Ideal Man, 97, 98, 118, 216.  
 Idealisation, 149, 234.  
*Idylls of the King*, 175.  
*Iliad*, 20, 219.  
*Ilmul Iqtisād*, 240.  
*Indian Antiquary, The*, 21, 104, 257.  
*Insānūl Kāmil*, 102.  
*Inferno*, 219.  
*Inside India*, 56.  
 'Irāqī, 114.  
 Islamia College, Lahore, 26.  
 Islamic Conference, 26.  
 Israel, 60.  
  
 JA'FAR, MĪR, 228.  
 Jalālud-Dīn Dawānī Mulla, 114.  
 Jalālud-Dīn Rūmī, *See* Rūmī.  
 Jamālud-Dīn Afghānī, 223, 224, 225.  
 Jāmī, 196.  
 Jami'a Millia, 27.  
*Jāvid Nāmah*, 19, 20, 94, 152, 212, 213, 217, 219, 220, 233, 237.  
*Jawāb-i-Shikwa*, 18.  
 Jehangir, 106.  
 Jerusalem, 26.

Jones William, 198.  
 Jinnah, Muḥammad 'Alī, 29,  
 31, 257.  
 Jung, 56.

KABIR, 29.  
 Kabul University, 27.  
 Kaiser, 223.  
 Kālidāsa, 20.  
 Kant, Immanuel, 119-121.  
*Kasb-i-ḥalāl*, 46, 53, 54.  
 Keats, 34.  
 Kempis, Thomas, 48.  
*Khidr*, 13.  
*Khidr-i-Rāh*, 19, 212.  
*Khwarizm Shāh*, 92.  
*Khusrau*, See Amīr *Khusrau*.  
*Kidwāi*, S.M.H., 225.  
 Kipling, Rudyard, 60, 65.  
*Kishan Pershād*, Sir Maharājā  
 24.  
 Kitchener, 226, 234.  
*Klassiker Ausgabe*, 130.  
 Knight, A.H.J., 122, 123,  
 128, 133, 140.

LAILĀ, 13.  
 Lāt, 223.  
 Lawrence, 50.  
 Lenin, 151, 159, 160, 163.  
 Leonardo da Vinci, 3.  
 Leibnitz, Gottfried, 119.  
*Literary Squabbles*, 10.  
 Locke John, 119.  
*Locksley Hall*, 212.  
 Logos, 100, 101.  
 London University, 14, 253.  
 Lothian, Lord, 31, 254.  
 Love, 46, 47, 97, 98, 159,  
 201-204, 225.  
 Ludwig, Emil, 217, 251.  
 Lucretius, 219.  
 Luther, Martin, 256.

MABSŪT, 33.  
*Mahābhārata*, 219.  
 Mahabat Khān, 216.  
 Maḥmūd Shabistārī, 217.  
 Mainz, Archbishop of, 1.  
*Majdhūb*, 138.  
*Major Barbara*, 50.  
*Makhzan*, 2, 7.  
 Manāt, 223.  
 Maṣṣūr Ḥallāj, 227.  
 Manu, 132.  
 Maternity, 72.  
 Masood, Sir Ross, 32.  
 Masood Lady, 32.  
*Mathis der Maler*, 1.  
*Mathnawī*, 92-95, 210-213,  
 217, 220.  
 McDougall, William, 64.  
 McTaggart, Dr., 21, 24, 143,  
 152.  
 Meer, 192, 200, 206.  
 Michael Angelo, 3.  
 Milton, John, 11, 20, 81, 152,  
 219, 237, 238, 245.  
 Mīr Damād, 114.  
 Mīr Ḥasan, Maulvī, See  
 Ḥasan.  
 Momin, 36, 51, 125.  
 Montaigne, 243.  
 Monotheism, 66.  
 Morley, Lord, 2.  
 Moses, 5.  
 Muḥammed, 8, 100, 222.  
 Muhyid-Dīn Muḥammad  
 Ibn-'Alī, See Ibnul 'Arabī.  
 Mujaddid, 106-108. Also  
 See Aḥmad Sirhindī.  
 Munirā 35.  
*Muraqqa-i-Chūgtai*, 146.  
*Musāfir*, 20, 212, 213.  
 Muslim League, 256.  
 Mussolini, 24.  
 Muṣṭafa, 58.  
 Mutanabbī, 152.

- Mu'tazilites, 110.  
 Myers, Mrs., 238.  
 Mysticism, 40, 74, 194-198, 241.  
 Mystic, 19, 48, 75, 85, 92, 95, 97, 98, poet 196, thought 197, poems 198.  
 NĀDĪR SHĀH, 24, 25, 231.  
 Nadheer Niyāzī, 36.  
 Nala-i-Yatīm, 7.  
 Napoleon, 151.  
 Nasab-parastī, 60.  
 Nawab of Bhopal, 32.  
 Nayā Shawālā, 9.  
 Nazīrī, 192.  
 Neo-Platonism, 39.  
 Neo-Platonic ideas, 100, 241.  
 Neo-Platonists, 85, 118, 200.  
 Newton, 72, 141.  
 Nibelungen Lied, 219.  
 Nizāmī, 212, 215.  
 Nizāmiah College, Baghdād, 108.  
 Nizāmud-Dīn, Khwājā, 11.  
 Nicholson, R.A., 24, 37, 47, 95, 102, 121, 134, 143, 187, 216, 241, 257.  
 Nietzsche, F.W., 109, 121, 122, 124-135, 137-141, 151, 230.  
 Nirvāna, 40.  
 ODYSSEY, 219.  
 Old Testament, 116.  
 'Omar Khayyām, 152.  
 'Omar Hadrat, 58.  
 Orphan's Address to the Id Crescent, 7. (Yatīm ka Khitāb)  
 Öst Westerliche Diwān, 19.  
 Outlines of Indian Philosophy, 39.  
 PAKISTĀN, 30, 31.  
 Pan-Islamism & Bolshevism, 225.  
 Pantheism, 197.  
 Pantheistic ideas, 241.  
 Paradise Lost, 11, 20, 219, 237.  
 Paradise Regained, 219.  
 Pas chai bāyad kard, 20, 212, 213, 215.  
 Paul, St., 1, 2, 138.  
 Payām-i-Mashriq, 19, 94, 139, 141, 213, 240, 242.  
 Perfect Man, 63, 64, 97, 101, 104, 119, 125.  
 Pindar, 152.  
 Plato, 79, 118, 132, 133, 134, 204.  
 Platonic, 39, 133.  
 Poetry, IX, 2, 3, 5, 9, 37, 129, 150, 151, 152, 154.  
 —Didactic, 213.  
 —Epic, 129, 152, 213, 218, 219.  
 —Lyric, 129, 152, 184 sqq.  
 —Philosophic, 152, 213, 214.  
 —Satiric, 152.  
 Pope, 214.  
 Punjab Legislative Assembly, the, 29.  
 Punjab University, the, 26.  
 QAIS, 13.  
 Qasīda, 186, 212.  
 Qit'a, 186.  
 Qur'ān, 32, 33, 85-91, 115, 116, 135.  
 Qismat, 127.  
 RADHAKRISHNAN SIR, S., 78.  
 Ramayana, 17, 219.  
 Rashīd Aḥmad Siddīqī, 244.  
 Rāzī, Imām, 92, 93.



*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, The*, 25, 53, 67, 76, 77, 101, 108, 109, 115, 127, 147, 197, 239, 254.  
 Recurrence, Eternal, 122, 125-127.  
 Relativity, Theory of 23, 142, 144.  
 Renan, Ernest, 29.  
*Revolution (Inqilāb)*, 182.  
 Robertson, J.W., 153.  
 Romanticism, 152, 153, 158.  
 Ronsard, 152.  
 Round Table Conference, 26, 31.  
 Rousseau, 242, 252.  
*Ruba'iyat*, 152.  
 Rūmī, Maulānā 4, 48, 85, 92-100, 152, 196, 202, 220, 221, 223.  
*Rumūz-i-Bekḥudī*, 17-19, 93, 94, 212, 213, 215, 216, 240, 242.  
 Ruskin, 213.  
 Russel, Hon. Bertrand, 117.  
 Ryder, A.W. 151.  
 SACHAU, 71.  
*Sadā-i-Dard*, 8.  
 Sa'di, 200, 220, 237.  
 Šādiq, 228.  
 Sadra, Mulla, 252.  
*Sahr-al-Bayan*, 212.  
 Sa'ib, 200, 206.  
 Sa'id Ḥalim Pāsha, 223, 224.  
 Saintsbury, 238.  
 Sanāi, 196.  
*Sāqi Nāmah*, 173, 212, 213.  
 Satan, 155, 213.  
 Scott, Sir Walter, 237.  
*Secrets of the Self*, 21, 43, 45, 47, 257.  
*Secret Rose Garden*, 217.

*Shāfa'ī*, Imām, 115.  
*Shafī'*, Muḥammad, 36.  
 Selincourt, E. De, 210.  
*Sikandar Nāmah*, 212, 215.  
*Shāhbāzud-Dīn Khān*, Ḥakīm, 6.  
*Shāh Nāmah*, 20, 212, 220.  
*Shakaib Arselān*, Amīr, IX.  
*Shamsi Tabrīz*, 93, 95.  
*Sharfun-Nisā*, 230.  
 Shairp, J.C., 216.  
*Shankaracharya*, 40, 41.  
 Shakespeare, 20, 151.  
*Shakuntalā*, 20, 81.  
*Sham'a aur Sha'ir*, 18, 22.  
 Shaw, Bernard, 50.  
 Shelley, 152, 162, 187.  
*Shibli Nu'mānī*, 96, 185.  
*Shikwā*, 18.  
 Simon Commission, 29.  
 Slavery, 56, 59.  
 Socrates, 133.  
 Space, 45, 69, 80, 113-116, 141-143.  
 Spinoza, 119.  
 Sri Krishna, 111.  
 Sri Rāmanujā, 111.  
*Strangling of Persia*, 38.  
 Šūfis, 114, 197, 255.  
 Šūfism, 21, 40, 95, 96, 109, 110, 198.  
 Syed Aḥmed Brelvī, 108.  
 Symbolism, 156.  
 Superman, 21, 36, 45, 62, 80, 89, 104, 111, 112, 118, 120, 122, 123, 124.  
 Su'al, 56, 58.  
 TABRIZ, 4.  
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 3, 35.  
 Tāhira, 227, 234.  
*Tanhāi*, 109.  
*Taskhir-i-Fiṭrat*, 155, 212, 213, 217, 219.

- Taswīr-i-Dard*, 8.  
*Tarāna-i-Hindī*, 9.  
 Tennyson, Lord, 10, 152, 175, 212.  
 Time, 45, 69, 80, 113-116 141, 143.  
*The Spider and the Web*, 7.  
*The Symphony of the Stars* (*Saroud-i-Anjum*), 165, 181, 182.  
*The Heart of Jainism*, 39.  
*The Hourī and the Poet* (*Hoor wa Sha'ir*), 166, 168.  
 Tipū Sultān, 231.  
 Tolerance, 53.  
 Tolstoy, 222.  
*Tulu'-i-Islam*, 19, 212.  
 UNITYISM, 40, 41, 100, 104, 108, 197.  
 'Urfī, 193.  
 Ursula, 2.  
 VEDANTA, 39.  
 Victor Hugo, 237.  
 Vinci, Leonardo da,  
 Virgil, 93, 220.  
 Vision, as a stage in Love, 75.  
 Voltheim, Baron von, 35.  
 WAḤDAT-AL-WUJŪD, 40, 104, 106.  
*Waḥdat-i-shahūd*, 106.  
 Wiemar, Duke of, 32.  
 Winckelmann, 23.  
 Wordsworth, William, 152, 237.  
 Worsfold, W.B., 219.  
*Wujūd-i-Basīt*, 42.  
 YATHRAB, 13.  
 Yazīd, 203.  
 Yearning, as a stage in Love, 75.  
 ZABŪR-I-'AJAM, 19, 181, 213.  
 Zarathustra, 123, 125.  
 Zoroaster, 222.



